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MEMOIRS OF LEOPOLD I.

LONDON: PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, STAMFORD STREET
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His Majesty Leopold the First,
King of the Belgians.

1866.

Sampson Low, Son & Marston, 188, Fleet Street, London.

MEMOIRS

OF

LEOPOLD I.,

KING OF THE BELGIANS.

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BY ROBERT BLACK, M.A.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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INTRODUCTION.

"As long as I live I will serve as a buckler to Belgium."
Leopold I.

In 1832 the independence of Belgium had received recognition from the five great powers of Europe. But this independence had now to be manifested, affirmed, we may even say, naturalized so far as to no longer encounter antagonist, unbeliever, or sceptic. Belgian nationality had to shake off the pall which had in the latter ages enveloped it, and shine forth again as in the glorious days of the Arteveldes and during the equally memorable epoch of the powerful dukes of Burgundy.

It was by identifying himself with his new country, and by ably guiding it athwart all obstacles and perils, that Leopold I. arrived at

the fulfilment of his high and glorious destiny. It was very well remarked by him (for he had the right to say so) to the old members of the National Congress: "You, for your part, made "Belgium; I, for mine, introduced it abroad."

Up to his accession the prince of Saxe-Coburg had found no occasion, if we except the negotiation touching the hereditary sovereignty of Greece, to really distinguish himself as politician and diplomatist. Up to that time he had figured honourably, as a general in the Russian service, in the liberating army of 1813-1814, and, from his marriage with Princess Charlotte, as field-marshal in the English army. As king of the Belgians he became mixed up, with Belgium herself, in all the great events of the last thirty-five years.

It is this participation, which his official position, strengthened by all the importance and authority derived from his personal qualities, commanded, that I now propose to pass in review. Leopold I. embraced in the scope of his solicitude the whole of Europe; and none had studied to better purpose or followed with better judgment the various phases of the history of the

nineteenth century. He had relations with all the sovereigns who successively occupied the attention of men from Alexander I. to Napoleon III.; he saw face to face all the influential politicians from the Duke d'Otranto to the Duke de Morny, from Lord Castlereagh to the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone. And what made his renown and gave character to his individuality is that he carried into all business which might be considered his own a great self-abnegation and into that of others an extraordinary impartiality. The wisdom of his counsels, the firmness and uprightness of his mind, the tact with which he always sought to remove or smooth down difficulties—those qualities which in the first place made him respected amongst the English, which afterwards rendered him the object of the wishes and desires of the Hellenes, and which ultimately caused the Belgians to fix their choice upon him—those same qualities were also at the bottom of his being so often accepted as arbiter by princes and by peoples. They came in concert to submit their disputes to his impartial and universally respected judgment. From the height of a Pharos, which, to use Homer's imagery, was pro-

tected against the wind, he followed the tumultuous movements of the world, and wherever he carried his friendly counsels, it was to the calming of the tempests.

He will not have in history a place beside men like Gustavus Adolphus or Joseph II., beside conquerors and reformers: but he will live in the memory of ages as the founder of a state which before his advent had sought in vain for independence; as the first head of that constitutional Belgium, which by his wisdom he was able to elevate to the rank of a model state.

He will live in the memory of men as the confidant, often consulted and listened to, of other monarchs, as one of the firmest supports of that wisely progressive policy which alone can insure the happiness of nations and the peace of the world. In fine, he will preserve in history the beautiful name of Europe's "justice of the "peace," the name of the peacemaker, which is worth quite as much as that of conqueror.

A word also of the constitutional sovereign. It is not true, as has been said, that Leopold I. accepted only with murmurs the pact voted by the Congress. He only maintained that, Royalty

not being there to defend itself, the Belgian constituents, who held their deliberations amidst a revolution, had given the lion's share to the legislative power. He nevertheless adopted the advice of a wise and loyal counsellor: after having attentively examined the constitution he accepted it, having determined to attempt the trial submitted confidently to his devotion. It was a task full of difficulties. To accomplish it with success required, according to the remark of an excellent publicist, a superior nature, rather conciliating than commanding, rather enlightened than elevated, pretending less to genius than to common sense and reason. And the English rendered fine homage to this superiority when they said: The mind of King Leopold seems to have been cut out by nature expressly for the Belgians. Leopold I. was very wary about provoking conflicts with the legislative assemblies which succeeded the Congress. He too remained faithful to the traditions of 1831. Without exceeding his prerogatives he took pains to maintain them with quiet firmness and to exercise them with moderation and tact. The king's influence, feeble at first, gained strength when he

was recognized as a truly able and far-seeing Head. Shy in manner, although he had a high idea of royal dignity, prudent in language, although he sometimes permitted a certain susceptibility to peep out, he finished by acquiring, but only through persuasion, an incontestable ascendancy in his own country as well as abroad. This personal influence, of which he avoided any exhibition, was greater, as M. Guizot has stated, than that which Louis Philip was so anxious to appear to possess. It has been remarked, also, that Leopold had not that which the French called "a minister of the crown." Whatever were his sympathies, he disguised them in submission to public opinion. What this self-abnegation sometimes cost him, who can say? But let us acknowledge, nevertheless, that he did not cease to faithfully perform his constitutional part. Honest in his relations with his ministers, he sometimes opposed their proposals; he discussed them with considerable warmth, and even endeavoured to burke them; but frequently also he encouraged his counsellors by noble and affectionate language. And when the vicissitudes of parliamentary government obliged him to

separate himself from one and another, he did not lose all recollection of services rendered. To his latest day he preserved affectionate relations with the greater part of the men who had sat in his councils. Always attentive and vigilant, but not wasting himself, according to the maxim of Pericles, he could keep parties in hand without giving himself up to them, and make himself respected by liberals as well as catholics, progressionists as well as conservatives. He did not seek to be initiative; it was rare that he was, for he was not inclined towards hasty and positive resolutions.

On most occasions that conciliation which formed the groundwork of his character, speedily made him victorious over the energy of a first impulse. He bore contradiction, but he could also show displeasure: he did not forget, however, that justice is, in Bossuet's words, the true virtue of monarchs. Rejoicing in the public happiness, and using his efforts to increase it more and more, he did not seek after popular ovations, and nevertheless he was very keenly alive to those manifestations of the country's gratitude.

In short, it may be affirmed that constitutional

government, far from dwarfing Leopold I., promoted the exhibition of the eminent qualities with which the prince was endowed. If Belgium has deserved the name of the school of Europe, she is certainly indebted for it, in a considerable degree, to her first king. That is the best eulogium on the sovereign who reigned from 1831 to 1865.

LEOPOLD I.,

KING OF THE BELGIANS.

CHAPTER I.

1832, 1833.

LEOPOLD AT COMPIÈGNE—THE TWENTY-FOUR ARTICLES—GEN. GOBLET AND LORD PALMERSTON — MARRIAGE OF KING LEOPOLD AND THE PRINCESS LOUISE—PROGRESS OF THE KING AND QUEEN OF THE BELGIANS TO LAEKEN—LORD PALMERSTON AND M. VAN DE WEYER — ANTWERP SURRENDERED—BELGIUM AND THE UNITED STATES—BELGIUM AND ITALY—LIMBURG AND LUXEMBURG—CORRESPONDENCE.

On the 28th of May, 1832, at six A.M., Leopold, accompanied by the principal officers of his court, left Brussels for Compiègne, where he was to meet the King of the French. At the frontier the Duke de Choiseul, Marshal Gérard, commander-in-chief of the Army of the North, the Prefect of the department, and other personages, awaited the King of the Belgians.

On his arrival about two, before Valenciennes,

he received a complimentary address, outside the Mons gate, from the municipal body; then he mounted his horse, and, escorted by the National Guard, made his entry into the town under a salute from the guns of the fortress. About four the authorities conducted him as far as the barrier of the Paris gate, whence he moved towards Cambrai. Next day he started for Péronne. At five P.M. he arrived at the summit of Mount Mouchy, where he was awaited by an escort of two squadrons of cuirassiers under the command of General Merlin. At the foot of the mountain he was received by the Duke de Nemours, accompanied by a brilliant staff. King Leopold, having dismounted, held out his hand affectionately to the young prince, embraced him with expressive cordiality, and begged him to take a seat beside himself in the carriage which had been prepared for him. The procession then made its entry into Compiègne amidst the roar of artillery.[1]

[1] The King of the Belgians was accompanied on this journey by Count d'Arschot, grand marshal of his court; by the Marquis de Chasteler, grand equerry; by General d'Hane, first aide-de-camp; by Major De la Gotellerie, orderly officer; by M. Julius Van Praet, private secretary; by

A considerable crowd pressed upon the guard of honour, which had difficulty in keeping it back; and on all sides, say contemporary accounts, was heard nothing but flattering remarks upon the noble, and at the same time gentle bearing of the august traveller. Soon the procession arrived at the courtyard of the castle. The King of the Belgians was received at the foot of the grand staircase by Louis Philip, who wore the uniform of the National Guard. The two kings embraced affectionately, and ascended together the grand staircase, at the top of which they were awaited by Queen Mary Amelia, and Mme. Adelaide d'Orleans. The 30th was occupied with a grand review and a stroll in the forest of Compiègne. These fêtes and demonstrations revealed the intimacy which had soon been established between the two kings, and which was to result in important resolutions. On the 6th of June, at six P.M., Leopold re-entered Brussels.

An alliance with the House of Orleans was warmly desired by King Leopold, as an irrevocable pledge of the intentions of France in respect of

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Sir Henry Seton, ex-aide-de-camp; and by M. Lebeau, physician.

Belgium, and also as a means of dissipating the persistent disquietudes and susceptibilities of England.[2] Leopold, therefore, had exerted himself to obtain from King Louis Philip a formal resolution; and he had not ceased to urge his minister at Paris to hasten this resolution. But, in spite of all his impatience to have with Louis Philip an interview, the significance of which would be noised abroad in Europe, it was only with the greatest difficulty, and not without some apprehension even, that he had brought himself to the decision of going away for a few days from Belgium. When, on the 2nd of May, Leopold had proposed the interview which was desired on both sides, he pointed out that Compiègne would be somewhat far to go to make the acquaintance of the Princess Louise. "We have been ac-"quainted," he said, "for sixteen years; that

[2] Baron Stockmar, Leopold's confidant, wrote to M. Le Hon from London, October 10, 1831: "About the king's "marriage, I think exactly as you: it is, in my idea, the "only real pledge of good faith France can give Europe, and, "on more than one ground, I desire it as anxiously as can "be. Though the English ministry have not yet declared "themselves to me personally on this point, I know, on "good authority, that they are quite of our opinion. . . ."

"appears to me sufficient." He would have liked, therefore, the King of the French to give him a meeting somewhere whence he might within four-and-twenty hours resume the direction of affairs, if the Dutch should attempt to renew their aggressions. In his eyes, Lille was the most convenient place. A little later he declared that the meeting at Compiègne could only take place if the King of the French would send Marshal Gérard, or at least General St. Cyr, to Brussels.[3] He ended, however, by giving way at the instance of Louis Philip.

In seeking the hand of a princess of the House of Orleans, Leopold not only considered the wishes of the Belgians, impatient to consolidate their independence, but, let us repeat, gave reassurance to Europe, because he struck the finishing blow at the party who favoured the union of Belgium with France. Now Louis being still interested in carefully humouring this party, the project of alliance met with unforeseen delays and difficulties, which gave rise to painful doubts. Leopold surmounted these obstacles by his

[3] King Leopold to M. Le Hon, March 7th, April 20th, May 2nd and 9th, 1832.

perseverance, and by a line of conduct very dignified, and at the same time very delicate. On the 7th of March he thus expressed himself: "With reference to the marriage, I think it "unnecessary to press it beyond measure: the "present steps must suffice; otherwise we might "be accused of importunity. I desire it on the "Princess Louise's individual account more than "for any other reason, and certainly I shall have "no more lively solicitude than that of seeing "her happy."[4] He said further that pecuniary arrangements ought not to be a cause of delay. "It is the amiable princess," he added, "and not "her portion, that interests me." Portion, dower, expectations, all these questions he treated with perfect disinterestedness. Lastly, he made

[4] On the 19th of December preceding, Baron Stockmar wrote from London to M. Le Hon: ". . . . Even in case "the government or the family should wish to put off the "marriage until the conclusion of affairs between Belgium "and Holland, it would be not the less necessary to labour "to at once arrange things so that the public should regard "this alliance as a matter perfectly understood and com- "pleted. I hope the report of this news will have a good "effect in France as well as here and in Belgium, and that "it will somewhat subdue King William's ebullient passion "for a restoration. . . ."

a concession of great value to Queen Mary Amelia and Princess Louise. "As the Queen, "and, perhaps, the Princess herself," he said, "consider it of great importance that children of "a marriage contracted with one of those "princesses should be Catholics; as that will be "a further link with the people, which is devoted "to its religion, I have no objection at all. It is "virtue and not name which makes the true "Christian."[5] The interview at Compiègne took place, as has been said, and the marriage of Princess Louise d'Orleans with King Leopold was decided. The *Belgian Monitor* of June 4th, officially announced the fact.

The execution of the twenty-four articles was also one of the chief occupations of King Leopold's mind. In accepting in London the conditional ratification given by Russia on the 4th of May, M. Van de Weyer had yielded to necessities of which the Belgian government did not at

[5] King Leopold to M. Le Hon, September 15th 1831, February 20th, March 7th, May 12th, 16th, and 17th, 1832. Lastly, on the 22nd of May, he wrote to him: "I undertake "with pleasure the tour the king has proposed to me, and "I will follow it in every point, though I could willingly "have dispensed with the ceremonial. . . . ."

once appreciate the force. The ministry at first regarded only the extreme embarrassment in which it was placed by that act of Russia, and demanded of the King that M. Van de Weyer should be summoned to Brussels, until there should have been means of forming a better appreciation of the possible consequence of the acceptance in question. General Goblet, on being sent to London to represent Belgium at the conference, received instructions (25th of May) to make a formal declaration that King Leopold would not participate in any negotiation on the *reserved* articles before the treaty had been executed in respect of the *non-reserved* articles, that is to say, before the evacuation of the territory still occupied by the Dutch.

General Goblet arrived in London on the 30th of May, sent next day his full powers to the conference, and on the 1st of June gave King Leopold an account of his interviews with Lord Palmerston, Baron Bulow, and Prince Talleyrand. He had acquired the conviction, he said, that the plenipotentiaries of the three northern powers still meant only to temporise, that that of France was a perfect adept in concealing his thoughts, and

that that of England alone appeared desirous of concluding. Leopold found this despatch on his return from Compiègne. On the 6th he replied: "My personal opinion is that, as long as Holland "does not see herself forced to evacuate the citadel "of Antwerp, she will not negotiate." He saw crying injustice in the injunction addressed in common to Belgians and Dutch, not to commence hostilities, seeing that the former had adopted the twenty-four articles, and that the latter made no account of them. If then, the powers were slow to execute the treaty, they ought not to restrain the Belgians from putting it in execution themselves. "Give my kind regards to Prince Talley- "rand," he proceeded, "and say that I do not "write to tell him of my marriage, because I know "that Mademoiselle Adelaide has just done so. "There must be no pause in demanding the exe- "cution of the treaty. Talleyrand cannot refuse; "King Louis Philip is determined to adhere to all "that England proposes.[6] ." However, Leopold

[6] It is the personal participation of Leopold I. in the memorable negotiations of this epoch that it is thought desirable to bring out here by making use of the private and unpublished correspondence of the king with General Goblet.

had still so little confidence in the celebrated diplomatist, that he wrote next day (June 7th) to M. Le Hon, to do anything in the world to get King Louis Philip to send immediately to London M. De Flahault, in the capacity of *traveller*, because the English government were not at all satisfied with the silence of Prince Talleyrand.

Being informed that the northern courts were making great efforts to induce the English cabinet to accept a treaty with Holland differing from the twenty-four articles, he wrote to his plenipotentiary at Paris: "You must prevent the "French government from being caught in this "snare. The powers cannot, without the consent "of Belgium, make a new treaty which would "change the twenty-four articles." The Conference of London having, on the 11th of June, drawn up three *explanatory articles*, in accordance with which the reciprocal evacuation of the

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As for the negotiations themselves, and the various incidents which resulted in decisive events, both are accurately reported in a work published by that statesman, under the title of HISTORICAL MEMORANDA: *Eighteen months of policy and negotiations connected with the first blow struck at the Treaties of* 1815 (Brussels, 1864, 2 vols. 8vo.).

respective territories of Belgium and Holland was to be effected on the 20th of July, he does not disguise his displeasure. "These last protocols," he wrote to his minister at Paris, "are all very "well; but this is mere paper, we want *acts*. "Why give the King of Holland till the 30th of "June, when he has had two years to make up "his mind? And, then again, another month "till the 20th of July? The French ministry "must be made to feel that there must be an "end; it must have that dinned into it inces- "santly. Prince Talleyrand is coming to the "rescue with all his subtleties; why, that has "done us nothing but harm. The little Belgium "has obtained, she has obtained only when France "has been firm. If Prince Talleyrand's meaning "is that Belgium is to be established only for a "few years, it makes a difference."

On the 14th of June Prince Talleyrand charged General Goblet to tell King Leopold that, if by the 30th there had been no satisfactory reply from the King of Holland, France and England were resolved to have recourse to force; and that he had himself received the word of honour of the plenipotentiaries of the northern courts that

their resolution would not affect the good understanding between the five courts.[7] Prince Talleyrand appeared at that time well disposed towards King Leopold, and treated the affairs of Belgium with less levity.[8]

At a time when England was solicited to employ force against Holland, her old ally, it was of equal importance to conciliate the Duke of Wellington.

Leopold, knowing better than anybody the great influence of the conqueror of Waterloo, laid strict injunctions upon his representative in London not to neglect him. "Tell the Duke of "Wellington," he wrote on the 19th of June, "that strolling yesterday in the neighbourhood of "Waterloo, I mused on that heroic will of his "to which he owed his important victory. It is "rendering him but justice to say that he ob-"tained his victories by his personal bravery. "The contrast presented by the rich harvests, the "tranquillity and peacefulness of the scenery,

[7] General Goblet to King Leopold, London, June 14th, 1832.

[8] Soon after he left London, where he was temporarily replaced by M. De Mareuil, till then Minister at the Hague.

" which must have presented so terrible a picture " of dead and dying on that 18th of the year " 1815, struck me forcibly, and caused me to " make many philosophical reflections."[9]

Shortly afterwards he again wrote to his plenipotentiary in London: "It is acts that we want. . . . . We poor Belgians are no longer the dupes " of kind words without results."[10] Foreseeing the events which would be rendered inevitable by the ultimate inactivity of the powers after the refusal of the King of the Netherlands to accept the propositions of the Conference, Leopold hastened on the organization of the national army. Furthermore, he ordered the strictest blockade of Maestricht, to put a stop to excursions of the Dutch garrison beyond the line reserved to the fortress.

On the 6th of July Lord Palmerston informed General Goblet that King William refused to sign any treaty into which the twenty-four articles should enter, and that he proposed a new project. Instead of having recourse without further delay to coercive measures, the Conference in its turn

[9] King Leopold to General Goblet, Laeken, June 19, 1832.

[10] King Leopold to General Goblet, June 22nd and 27th, 1832.

worked out a new project to oppose to that from the Hague. General Goblet protested loudly against this forgetfulness of the rights of the Belgians, and his conduct, at once firm and able, was approved of by King Leopold, although the latter, under the influence of feelings easy to imagine, showed himself well disposed to make some sacrifices to the self-respect of Holland.

But an energetic note, forwarded on the 7th of July by his plenipotentiary to the Conference, came in time to re-establish the true position of the Belgians with respect to the powers which had guaranteed their independence. The Conference, however, kept up its dealings with King William, for the purpose of bringing him to a friendly execution of the treaty of November 15, 1831. "You can tell Lord Palmerston," wrote King Leopold on that occasion, "that the Con-"ference, when I think of it, gives me the heart-"ache; the only thing it seems capable of is to "maltreat me and protect the King of Holland."[11]

He had more reason, however, to find fault with Louis Philip, who, to avoid all differences of

[11] King Leopold to General Goblet, Brussels, July 17th, 1832.

a kind to alter the good understanding between the great powers, pressed King Leopold to give in his adhesion without delay to the propositions of the cabinet of the Hague. But the Minister of Foreign Affairs,[12] to remain faithful to his engagements with the legislature, distinctly repudiated this advice. On the 26th of July, Captain Beaulieu, General Goblet's aide-de-camp, brought to the latter from Brussels the following instructions: "If new proposals, accepted by the Dutch go- "vernment, were submitted to him, the Belgian "plenipotentiary would confine himself to reply- "ing to the Conference that the government "could not and would not declare itself till after "the evacuation of Belgian territory."

Such were the remarkable incidents which were succeeding one another in London at the time when King Leopold was also pressing for the accomplishment of the promise but lately made at Compiègne.

After his return from that place, he had been distressed by the notions of Queen Mary Amelia, who wished to put off the marriage till early in

[12] M. De Muelenaere.

the month of August. On the 16th of June he wrote to his minister at Paris: "The Belgian "business must be settled in these two months. "It is as much to the interest of France and Louis "Philip as it is to mine." Next day he expresses himself more forcibly: "I hope my letter to the "King will have a happy influence on his deter- "mination. . . . . I exhort you to follow your "system of attack with the greatest energy. . . . . "Be for ever and ever repeating that it is "absolutely necessary for the well-being of "France, of England, and of Belgium, that the "matter be settled as soon as possible . . . ." He supposed Louis Philip wished to wait for the evacuation of the citadel of Antwerp before fixing the date of the marriage. "In diplomacy," he said upon this subject, "it is a great merit, when "you do not want to deceive others, not to "let yourself be deceived." However, as has already been said, he showed himself to be facile and yielding in questions of pecuniary interest. "All I have in the world," he wrote on the 23rd of June, to his representative at Louis Philip's court, "shall be at the service of the *regina in spe* "(*queen presumptive*), and all that can be agree-

"able or advantageous to her I shall be too "happy to offer her." He was not less explicit four days afterwards. "I have just received," he said, "the three copies of the marriage contract. "As to the dower, I have written to you in "positive terms that I see no objection to the "300,000 francs (£12,000), although, with due "regard to proportion, I consider the dower con- "siderable, seeing that but 500,000 francs "(£20,000) were settled on an Empress of the "French. I presume the Chamber will vote it, "and if, contrary to expectation, it do not vote "the whole amount, I shall still be able to insure "to her the complement out of my private "means. . . . ." Louis Philip having subsequently consulted King Leopold as to the place where the marriage should be celebrated, the latter replied: "My opinion being asked, I am for "Compiègne; since at Paris it would be neither "one thing nor the other. I promise, however, "in this case to return in October, for a series of "fêtes at Paris." Towards the end of July, the representative of King Leopold at the court of the Tuileries combated with all his might, and with all the means of influence at his disposal, the

serious project of still putting off the date of the union so much desired. Louis Philip, shutting his ears to certain insinuations of diplomacy, decided at last, on the 1st of August, that the marriage should be definitively fixed for the 9th.

On the 6th, towards evening, King Leopold made his entry into Compiègne. He was in an open carriage, in which were seated the Dukes d'Orleans and De Nemours; in other carriages were the Duke de Choiseul and the Marquis de Marmier, who had both gone to meet the King of the Belgians to the frontier, and the personages who accompanied the king. These were, MM. Le Hon and Van de Weyer, representatives of Belgium in Paris and London; Count d'Arschot, Count Felix de Mérode, General d'Hane de Steenhuyse, Colonel Sir E. Cust, ex-aide-de-camp, General de Chasteler, M. J. Van Praet, Baron Stockmar, and Colonel Prisse. A triumphal arch, draped with French and Belgian flags, had been erected at the entrance of the town, on the bridge.

The two following days were distinguished by fêtes.

On Thursday, August 9th, at half-past eight in

the evening, King Louis Philip, giving his hand to Princess Louise, then twenty-one years of age,[13] and followed by the members of his family, entered the state-room of the castle, where King Leopold had also taken his place with his appointed witnesses, as well as the other persons who had accompanied him to Compiègne. Several ministers and the highest personages of the state were amongst those present. Baron Pasquier, president of the Chamber of Peers, discharged the functions of registrar. The King of the Belgians' witnesses were Count d'Arschot, Grand Marshal of his Court and member of the Senate, and Count Felix de Mérode, minister of state and member of the Chamber of Representatives. Four peers and four deputies served as witnesses for Princess Louise. The former were, Lieut.-General the Duke de Choiseul, the Marquis de Barbé-Marbois, first president of the Court of Exchequer, Count Portalis, first president of the Court of Appeal, and the Duke de Bassano. Marshal Gérard, M. Dupin, attorney-general in the Court of Appeal, M. Bérenger, and

[13] She was born at Palermo, April 3rd, 1812.

M. Benjamin Delessert belonged to the Chamber of Deputies.

When the bride and bridegroom had pronounced the assent exacted by law, M. Pasquier said: "By command of the king, and in the "name of the law, we declare that the most "high, mighty, and excellent Prince Leopold, "first of the name, King of the Belgians, "Duke of Saxony, Prince of Coburg-Gotha, and "the most high and mighty Princess Mary "Louise Theresa Caroline Isabella, Princess "d'Orleans, are united in marriage." The bishop of Meaux then gave them the nuptial benediction in one of the rooms which had been converted into a chapel. After the Catholic ceremony, the royal family and those present repaired to another room, where a Protestant minister gave the august pair the nuptial benediction according to the Lutheran rite.

Four days afterwards the King and Queen of the Belgians left the castle, and their journey from Compiègne to Laeken was one continued triumphal progress. It needs to have been a witness of the spontaneous joy of our population, to be able to appreciate the spell which from

that time in a manner hung about the young queen. The houses were decorated with flowers and flags with the tricolours of France and Belgium; everywhere was an immense crowd; everywhere, too, were acclamations, which said to the bride: "Right welcome amongst us."[14]

Queen Louise brought with her the consolidation of Belgium's independence. "The union "which received the benediction in the chapel "of Compiègne," said an eloquent orator afterwards, "revealed to astonished nations two facts "of the first importance: the alliance of France

[14] Everything passes away. It is impossible to read without emotion the following lines penned by Count Felix de Mérode, and addressed from Trélon to King Leopold: ". . . . But lately, on my return from a journey "to the frontier of Spain, I wished once more to see "the place where I had been, sir, the witness of your "marriage, twenty-five years ago. I walked in solitude "through the apartments of the castle of Compiègne, where "I had lived for a week amongst so many illustrious "personages. I explored the magnificent and ever charming park, kept with the perfection of care. An old servant "of Mdme. Adelaide conducted me. You may judge, "sir, whether I did not think of you, of our queen, so "worthy of eternal remembrance, and of her family become "your own. . . ." *Life of Count Felix de Mérode*, by J. J. Thorissen, p. 370.

" and England, which was formed on that very " occasion, and which was then the safeguard of " the peace of the world; and the recognition of ' Belgian neutrality, which fixed, in a rational " and durable manner, the limits—so long uncer- " tain and disputed—of neighbouring nations."

However the Cabinet of Brussels persisted in subordinating, absolutely, the direct negotiation —which was desired by the powers—between Belgium and Holland to the preliminary evacuation of the national territory. But after having adhered steadfastly to this purpose, after having even promised to resort to arms in case the reserved ratifications should put an obstacle in the way of the adoption by Holland of the twenty-four articles, Leopold saw that the country would find itself in a situation of peril, if there were an obstinate repudiation of every practicable proposal.[15] As for M. de Muelenaere, he remained immovable: he resisted both the patriotic counsels of General Goblet and the powerful pressure of Baron Stockmar, as well as the arguments founded upon considerations of European

[15] *Historical Memoranda*, by General Goblet, I., p. 135.

order and the prophecies amounting almost to threats of Lord Palmerston.

From the month of May General Goblet had been bearing all the burthen of these difficult negotiations. On the 18th of August, M. Van de Weyer resumed the duties of minister plenipotentiary at the Court of St. James's and at the Conference. He obtained from Lord Palmerston an interview of several hours' duration, which was succeeded by a second interview of no less importance. In conformity with his instructions he recalled to Lord Palmerston's memory what King Leopold had written from Compiègne and had repeated to him at Tournay, that he wished everything to be ended by September 30th, and that, in any case, the ratifications by Holland and the evacuation of territory should be completed immediately. But Lord Palmerston asserted himself energetically against the plan to which the Cabinet of Brussels was obstinately attached. "My devotion to King Leopold," he said, "is real and unfeigned. It is with true "sorrow, therefore, that I see his ministers' "policy: it will compromise the king and the "independence of Belgium. . . . They want pre-

" liminary evacuation. But this evacuation is pos-
" sible only by virtue of King William's adhesion
" to the twenty-four articles. . . . Now how to
" obtain this adhesion, pure and simple? By
" coercive measures? Well, I tell you honestly we
" shall not have recourse to them: it would be
" inexcusable in us to employ them, when we have
" room to believe that negotiations may induce a
" solution in conformity with the engagements we
" have made with Belgium. The nation would
" never sanction such a measure; and if England
" refuse, as she must, to have recourse to force,
" France, undoubtedly, will not follow a different
" course. But in this case, you say, Belgium—
" alone—will make war; she—alone—will compel
" Holland to sign the twenty-four articles! I
" answer that the war which is so lightly spoken of
" in Belgium, is the course most perilous to your
" future, to your independence, to your king's
" throne, and at the same time most hurtful to
" your commercial and industrial interests."

Lord Palmerston talked with M. Van de Weyer of a way which had been suggested by the Emperor of Russia to Lord Durham, King William IV.'s ambassador at St. Petersburg, of

bringing about the evacuation of the citadel of Antwerp: it was to have it occupied by English troops, to whom the King of Holland would consent to capitulate. M. Van de Weyer answered that the Belgian constitution was formally opposed to it, and that the minister who should authorise such an occupation would indubitably be impeached.[16]

On the 17th of August, King Leopold sent word also to General Goblet that a conclusion must be arrived at by September 10th, but he added, however, that the great business of the moment was to attend and to see whether Holland meant honestly. After receiving the last despatches from London, he wrote: "We must hear the "proposals of Holland; if she offer an acceptable "and speedy end, accept them; if they be treach- "erous, refuse them, and insist upon the treaty."[17] Yielding to the king's urgency, and appreciating moreover all the delicacy of his colleague, General Goblet had consented to pursue these difficult

[16] M. Van de Weyer to the King of the Belgians, London, August 21, 1832.

[17] King Leopold to General Goblet, Laeken, August 31, 1832.

labours in concert with M. Van de Weyer. On September 9th he returned unexpectedly to Brussels, with proposals emanating from Lord Palmerston. Concerted with the Belgian plenipotentiaries, and drawn up in part by M. Van de Weyer, they laid down bases beyond which the cabinet of King Leopold could not be drawn in the negotiation which there was a question of opening with Holland. It was a sort of ultimatum, and was called *Lord Palmerston's theme.*

The king subscribed to it without any difficulty, but M. de Muelenaere remained immovable. Then, on the 15th of September, Leopold called a council of all his ministers under his own presidency, and invited them to make known one by one their opinions about the proposals brought from London. They declared in substance that, by reason of the engagements they had entered into in presence of the Chambers, they could not concur in the new negotiation. M. de Muelenaere having resigned the portfolio of foreign affairs, General Goblet consented, on the 18th, to take it provisionally. The other ministers, resignatory likewise, remained at the heads of their departments, but only as temporary administra-

tors, and until the cabinet should be reconstituted. However, they did nothing to advance matters: not one of the members of the late ministry would even countersign the nomination of General Goblet. An almost mysterious search had to be set on foot for Count Felix de Mérode, who was at his estate of Trélon, on the French frontier. He was taken straight to the king's closet, and there he gave, as minister of state and member of the council, the counter-signature required to render valid the appointment of General Goblet. The latter wrote at that time to Baron Stockmar: "The king has shown a patience, I "might even say an impassibility, quite admirable, "in the painful circumstances in which his ad- "visers have placed him."

What rendered the position of General Goblet more difficult was, that nobody understood him: he found himself, as he himself said, really isolated in the country. Having no assistant except M. Nothomb, secretary-general in the ministry of foreign affairs, he nevertheless remained impassible and confident. M. Van de Weyer, having received full powers to open a direct negotiation with Holland, notified to the Conference, in a

note of September 20th, that his government reserved to itself the right of claiming execution of the engagements contracted by each of the powers, if the new negotiation brought no result. A glimpse was speedily caught of the catastrophe of this diplomatic drama. On the 26th, the Conference, having heard the Dutch plenipotentiary in person,[18] after having previously received written answers to questions proposed to him, declared that all hope of conciliation seemed, for the present, to be illusory, and that nothing remained but to concert measures with a view to ulterior steps. The Conference, on the 1st of October, unanimously took a more grave determination: it acknowledged that coercive measures had become necessary. However, the representatives of the northern courts stopped mid-way: they declared, in fact, that their courts could not be associated with any but pecuniary measures.

Louis Philip showed hesitation, but events drew him on. On the 11th of October was constituted, under the presidency of Marshal Soult, the cabinet in which the Duke de Broglie

[18] It was Baron Zuylen.

held the portfolio of foreign affairs, M. Thiers the ministry of the interior, and M. Guizot the department of public instruction. Next day, the representative of Belgium at Paris notified to the Duke de Broglie that all means of temporisation were exhausted: that on the 20th of October at the latest, the Belgian government, in default of action on the part of the powers, would be forced to act, and without any doubt would act. The cabinet of October 11th, exposed to the most violent attacks on the part of the opposition, must either show vigour or perish at the birth. So the Duke de Broglie answered the Belgian minister:—"We will act, and at once, if England "consent."[19] The cabinet of St. James's, which feared the accession in France of a ministry of the extreme left, gave its assent. The convention signed October 22nd between France and England, stipulated that if, on the 15th of November, there were still Dutch troops on the territory assigned to Belgium, a French army should penetrate thither to effect the evacuation of it.[20]

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[19] M. Le Hon to General Goblet, Paris, October 12, 1832.

[20] Some months after (August 30, 1833), King Leopold wrote to General Goblet: ". . . What is said about the

MM. Lebeau and C. Rogier had just joined General Goblet, the former as minister of justice, the latter as minister of the interior. These three men, whose energy and patriotism were up to the level of events, had determined, on the 21st of October, that if, by November 3rd, France and Great Britain had not given up their inactivity, they would propose to the king to immediately commence hostilities, and that if the Head of the State did not think he could adopt this plan, they would resign their portfolios. But Leopold had already authorised the Belgian representatives in Paris and London, MM. Van de Weyer and Le Hon, to make known his unchangeable resolution to put himself, by his own forces, in possession of the territory occupied by the enemy, if England and France remained inactive. As for himself, he ardently desired, by fighting at the head of the national army, which amounted then to one hundred thousand men, to wipe out the

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" assistance of the two Powers is a mere pleasantry: the " Broglie ministry had perished without Antwerp, and the " English ministry judged it wiser to let things be than to " have a ministry of the extreme left, which meant a general " war. . . . ."

remembrance of the cruel reverses of August, 1831. The occupation of the citadel of Antwerp by the Dutch was moreover a lasting humiliation: so long as the guns of this fortress threatened the commercial metropolis of the kingdom, the independence of Belgium remained unsteady.

But France and England held to their engagements. On the 5th of November their combined fleets made sail for the coasts of Holland. On the 15th, the French army of the north, under the command of Marshal Gérard, crossed the Belgian frontier, and on the 19th the advanced guard was beneath the walls of Antwerp. King Leopold could not hide from himself that the part imposed upon the Belgian army by the Conference of London, became from that time a very painful one. He repaired, however, on the 30th of November, to his head-quarters at Lierre, "to be," as he said, "a little nearer." Although he did not give implicit faith to the threat of a fresh bombardment, he desired, in his own words, "to be near those of his children who "were most exposed to danger."[21] General

[21] King Leopold to General Desprez, November 30th, 1832.

Chassé, who had the command in the citadel, was informed by a confidential letter from the Prince of Orange that there was no assistance to be expected. Nevertheless, he defended himself obstinately and heroically, and on the 23rd of December he left to the French nothing but a heap of ruins.[22] On the 31st the Belgian troops took possession of the citadel, and some days afterwards the French recrossed the frontier.[23]

The principal organs of the Legitimist party in

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[22] SEELIG *on the citadel of Antwerp* (1830-1832), by W. J. Knoop, Lieut.-General in the Netherlands army, *passim* (Schiedam, 1867, 2 vols. 12mo.).

M. Van de Weyer wrote to General Goblet, November 28th: "As regards the intervention of France and the "attack on the citadel of Antwerp, I think I can assure "you that neither Austria nor Prussia find serious fault with "that measure. If they appear, by certain expressions of "displeasure, to hold aloof from the intentions of the "cabinets of London and Paris, I have occasion to think "that it is simply that they may not alienate Russia, and "that at bottom the cabinets of Berlin and Vienna approve "of the armed intervention, by expressing wishes for a "speedy conclusion of the business. All our difficulties "come from Russia. . . . "

[23] Louis Philip to King Leopold, December 27th, 1832: ". . . . What I am most anxious for, is that nothing may "stop the retrograde movement of our army, which I long "to see re-enter France. . . ." *Retrospective Review*, p. 327.

France maintained loudly that had the elder branch of the Bourbons still been upon the throne, Belgium had become French. This assertion, which was at least a rash one, was energetically animadverted upon by the Belgian Catholic journals. The most influential journal replied: "There would be no end if one were to "attempt to animadvert upon all the inaccuracies "and all the exaggerations which our neighbours "daily set down to our account. Such, amongst "others, is the illusion they are under about a "pretended hankering on the part of Belgium "after incorporation with France. They persist "in this blindness. However, after the two "expeditions made by the French army into our "provinces, they might easily have undeceived "themselves; and they must find pleasure in "their mistake, not to alter their tone after "this double experience. They know that our "allies were received with good-will, but without "enthusiasm; as friends, but not as compatriots. "The Belgians remained Belgian at the sight of "the tricolor flag; our soldiers, whilst embracing "old brothers in arms, did not forget their coun-"try; the two armies did not become fused,

" each remained under its own flag; our liberators " were able to return without having to combat " our anxiety to detain them; they carry with " them our sentiments of grateful acknow- " ledgment, but not our regrets at this separa- " tion."

Louis Philip repaired to Lille, to distribute to the troops on their return from Antwerp the rewards they had so well deserved. On the 12th of January, 1833, he made his entry into the chief town of the department of the north, whither he had been preceded by the King and Queen of the Belgians. The two sovereigns had long conversations about the means of reviving Belgium. Louis Philip laid down the principle that she, having become an independent nation, ought to be at the least as well off as at the time of her union with Holland; and with this declaration the two kings parted.[24] Acting on the word of the King of the French, Leopold exerted himself incessantly to remedy the sufferings of commerce and industry, and he never ceased to protest against the disastrous blockade of the Meuse and

[24] King Leopold to M. Le Hon, Brussels, January 29, 1833.

the Scheldt. His policy was directed by far-sighted views.

Whilst the acknowledgment in due form of the first King of the Belgians was in course of accomplishment in Europe, America applauded our independence, and its government likewise established official relations with the new state. M. Behr, envoy to the United States, had arrived at Washington on the 3rd of June, 1832, and the next day but one had been granted his first interview with Mr. Livingston, Secretary of State, and real head of the government under President Andrew Jackson, at that time considered an old man half relapsed into childhood. But the ancient and implacable foe of J. Q. Adams and of the *Federalists*, the old chief of the *Republicans*, he who had declared himself *the man of the people*, had lost no whit of his prestige with the multitude. With the people General Jackson was always the Hannibal of the West, the defender of the liberties of the world, the conqueror of the conquerors of the great Napoleon.[25]

[25] Andrew Jackson, elected president by a large majority in 1829, obtained a still larger majority in November, 1832, when he offered himself as a candidate a second time.

The Belgian envoy was well received by that odd and celebrated personage who was also known by the name of the Marius of America.

M. Behr wrote to Brussels that the President, the ministers, and all Americans with whom he had conversed, had testified a desire to enter into intimate relations with Belgium.[26] He availed himself of these good dispositions for the purpose of commencing negotiations to end in the conclusion of a commercial treaty. He rendered further service: he ably fought against the prejudices which existed, chiefly in New York, against Belgium and her revolution.

After the United States, Austria next entered into regular negotiations with the new Belgium. On the 18th of May, 1832, Prince Metternich wrote to Sir Robert Adair, representative of England at Brussels: "King Leopold, to whom "I beg you to give my respects, should have "received through Baron Wessemberg an invita-"tion to address to the emperor a letter notifying "his accession; that is to say, to repeat what at the "first attempt was not entertained." Three months

[26] M. Behr to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Washington, June 9th, 1832.

however passed before this diplomatic formality, as Prince Metternich called it, was accomplished, and King Leopold more than once grew impatient at the difficulties offered by Austria and Prussia to the reception of the Belgian envoys. "It is "time," he wrote to London, June 10th, "all "these pettinesses should cease." At last, August the 5th, Count Lalaing was received at Baden at a private audience by the Emperor Francis, and delivered to him the King of the Belgians' letter of notification. The emperor appeared well-disposed and even friendly. He said he was going to answer the king's letter, and that no one was more desirous than himself for the happiness of the prince and his people. Count Lalaing only heralded Baron Loë, accredited as minister plenipotentiary at the Court of Austria. King Leopold had chosen him, not by reason of any superiority, but because, besides his fair reputation, he was slightly related to several Austrian families, and spoke German. Baron Loë being likewise received at Baden, August the 19th, found the Emperor Francis more reserved, adopting a tone of coldness and even bitterness in his language. He said there had been in-

justice in despoiling the King of Holland; but as the latter had himself recognized Belgian independence in principle, Austria had, with the other powers, concurred in the establishment of the kingdom of Belgium, although Austria did not like to sanction injustice. Going back to the end of the preceding century, the emperor added that he had always been well satisfied with the Belgians, but that he was charmed to think that his dominions would no longer touch the frontiers of France; for that, in the interest of his subjects, he wished to avoid contact with the opinions of that country. Speaking, at the end, of the last proposals of the conference, he expressed an opinion that Belgium ought to accept them, and that the king ought to be *discreet*. The reception accorded by Prince Metternich to the second Belgian envoy was less stiff. He made a great outcry, however, when Baron Loë announced to him the firm and unchangeable resolution of the king and his government to treat no more about *anything* until after the evacuation of at least the citadel of Antwerp.[27]

[27] Baron Loë to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Baden, August 21st, 1832.

Leopold regarded Berlin as a "delicate post," and wished to send General Goblet thither. But he being retained, first in London and then at Brussels, General de Mercx was substituted, who on the 13th of September delivered to Frederick William III., at the palace of Charlottenburg, his letters of credit, and those which notified the marriage of the King of the Belgians. Frederick William said he highly appreciated the sentiments of King Leopold, whom he had known, he added, from his tenderest years, from the age of twelve or thirteen; then he expressed a strong desire to see an amicable arrangement of the difference with Holland. "Hostilities," he added, "could not "be tolerated at this time any more than they "were last year."[21]

On the very day when General Mercx was received at the palace of Charlottenburg by Frederick William III., Viscount Charles Vilain XIV. presented to the president of the Helvetic Confederation the letters of notification of King Leopold's accession and those of his marriage. "Belgium," said the representative of

[21] General de Mercx to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Berlin, September 15th, 1832.

King Leopold, "is now as Switzerland is, con-
" stituted an independent and neutral state. . . .
" Though distant, we will unite to avert war from
" the banks of the Rhine, the Meuse, and the
" Scheldt. . . . ." The President answered:
" On receiving from the hands of your excellency
" the letters intended for the Swiss Confederation
" and State Council of the Canton of Lucerne,
" the Federal Directory are anxious to express to
" you how sensibly impressed they are by the
" friendly assurances contained therein. . . . The
" Confederation, enlightened by long experience,
" fully appreciates the benefits of its neutral posi-
" tion; it sees therein the pledge of its liberty,
" and of the kindly relations it keeps up with all
" the states of Europe. The same principles
" which have hitherto guided it, it will observe with
" pleasure in respect of a nation which, like itself,
" owes its prosperity to industry, and will find, like
" itself, in an honourable and sturdy neutrality the
" guarantee of its independence."

M. Vilain XIV. was likewise accredited to the courts of Italy; but in those homes of absolutism the welcome he received was less open. On arriving at Turin, the representative of King Leo-

pold remarked everywhere great fear of France and a horror of its revolution, without any effort at concealment. However, the persons with whom M. Vilain XIV. conversed tried to persuade him, through politeness, no doubt, that they did not confound the Belgian with the French revolutionists. King Charles Albert, who received him October 5th, behaved graciously, but was far from communicative.[29] He asked news of King Leopold, whom he knew, and news of the queen; he spoke not a word further about politics, or anything in the slightest degree connected with the affairs of Belgium; he chatted about the fine arts, especially painting and the Flemish school, about which he knew a great deal.

Mary Louise, Duchess of Parma, received the Belgian minister October 17th. She spoke not a word of politics, but talked about the palace of Laeken, which she had lived in when she was Empress of the French, and asked a great many questions about the king and queen.

On the 23rd of November following, the representative of King Leopold was admitted to

[29] Charles Albert had occupied the throne of Sardinia since April 27th, 1831.

solemn audience by Pope Gregory XVI. He preserved a precious recollection of the pontiff's kindness. "The pope dispensed," he wrote, "with all the customary etiquette, genuflexions, "toe-kissing, and even hand-kissing; he took both "my hands, shook them after the English fashion, "and made me sit right at his side. He kept me "three quarters of an hour, during which he told "me in detail all the tribulation King William had "caused him to endure as Cardinal Capellari at "the time of the Concordat of 1826. He told me "all this with the good-nature, careless ease, and "air of pleasure with which an old friend recalls "past dangers to the companion of his toil, and "loves to dwell upon the details of the storm." Gregory XVI., raised to the chair of St. Peter at the date of the destruction of the kingdom of the Netherlands (February 2nd, 1831), concluded the conversation with the following words: "I charge you, sir, to express to the king all my "gratitude for the fairness with which he observes "that article of the constitution which secures to "the Church independence of the civil power, and "to the Holy See its rights over the government "of the Church."

On his arrival at Naples towards the end of December, at the time that Belgium had again become the theatre of events which might have set Europe once more aflame, M. Vilain XIV. was ill-received in a capital of which the French Legitimists had made another Coblentz. Prince Cassaro, Minister of Foreign Affairs, a fervent disciple of retrograde diplomacy, displayed remarkable coldness and haughtiness. He could not, however, prevent the minister of a revolutionary state from delivering, December 20th, to the King of Naples, letters announcing the triumph of the revolution of September. Ferdinand II., then twenty-two years old, showed considerable embarrassment. He said, or rather stammered, that he was charmed to establish kindly relations between himself and his cousin, and that he was persuaded his cousin's wife would be very happy. "I tried," wrote M. Vilain XIV., "to "talk about Naples, the Museum, Vesuvius, the "Neapolitan army, whose uniforms are superb, "but nothing succeeded, and the audience ceased "at the end of a few moments."[30]

[30] Viscount Vilain XIV. to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Naples, December 21, 1832.

Leopold, subordinating dynastic interests to the interest of the country, did not desire with extreme ardour an end of his differences with Holland; that is, an arrangement which would certainly have gained him King William's recognition, but would have obliged Belgium to fulfil the injunctions of the treaty of November 15th.

"If," said he, "everybody in Belgium thought "as I think, they would make up their minds not "to have the definitive treaty. It will cost us "about twenty-four millions of francs (£960,000) "a year, and that is an immense sum for a small "country; and the cession of a number of good "folks who like us is a really painful thing."[31]

As the Dutch had refused after the capitulation of the citadel of Antwerp to surrender the forts of Lillo and Liefkenshoeck, the Belgian government, on its side, kept possession of the territories of Limburg and Luxemburg, severed from Belgium by the treaty of November 15th.

An English fleet continued, however, to narrowly blockade the ports of Holland, in spite of the outcries of the city of London. Soon the

[31] King Leopold to M. Le Hon, January 18, 1833.

complaints of the preponderating class of merchants became so loud that King William saw he must bend. Powers were given to his agents to discuss the conditions of an indefinite armistice, which had been proposed by the Cabinet of St. James's. On the night of May 21-22, Prince Talleyrand and Lord Palmerston on the one part, representing France and England, and M. Dedel, minister of the King of the Netherlands, on the other, signed a convention which left to Belgium the disputed parts of Luxemburg and Limburg until the conclusion of the definitive treaty, and which bound the King of the Netherlands to lay down arms and to clear of obstacles the navigation of the Scheldt and of the Meuse.

Subjoined is the interesting correspondence on which the chapter is based.

CORRESPONDENCE.

* *King Leopold to M. Le Hon, Belgian Minister at Paris.*[1]

"Brussels, May 2, 1832.

"I have just written to the King to propose an interview. "I explained to him in a few words that Compiègne would "be a *little* too far to go to make the Princess's acquaintance: "the fact is *we have been acquainted for sixteen years*, and that "seems to me *sufficient*. I begged the King to fix upon "some place nearer the frontier, Lille for instance. I "could without any inconvenience repair thither *incontinently*, "as I do not think the Dutch have any intention of attack- "ing us. However, if they did, contrary to all expectation, "it would be easy for me to return immediately. In respect "of Belgium, as I told the King, the State means me. It "is not therefore a matter of indifference for the Belgians "whether I be far or near, and if I went as far as Com- "piègne there would be a *panic*.

"The kind treatment of M. Thorn has not increased, "amongst those who have been of any account in the revo- "lution, a desire to find themselves under the paws of the "paternal William. The idea of having to go three leagues

[1] All letters marked * are heretofore unpublished.

" a-foot with your hands tied behind your back and a gag " in your mouth is not at all tempting.[2]

" If, then, the King is willing to meet me anywhere " whence I could within twenty-four hours return to the " head of affairs, I am ready *from to-day* to meet him " wherever he pleases.

" I think it desirable that I should see him soon.

" I believe this sign of union *will suffice* to take away " from the Dutch *all ideas of aggression. That alone, as the*

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[2] M. Thorn, governor of Belgian Luxemburg, wrote as follows to the delegate of the deputation from the States : " I would have written " to you yesterday, but I was so overcome in mind and body that I could " not. To-day I am slightly better, and I lose no time in giving you the " details of the unlucky event which deprives me of my liberty. It appears " to me that there had for a long while been a determination to take me " when occasion offered. In the course of last week it was known that I " would go on Sunday to Schoenfeltz; consequently half a score of fellows, " almost all belonging to the corps of Tornaco, as it is called, and some " custom-house officers, received orders to take me by a sudden attack, " and they were sworn to secrecy. By Saturday they were already posted " in the woods about Schoenfeltz, more than three leagues' distance from " Luxemburg, and a long way out of the strategical territory of the fortress. " Here about 10 A. M. I was on my road as usual to my sheepfold. I " was unarmed and unsuspicious, when, in the middle of the wood, three " fellows of Tornaco's corps, armed to the teeth, threw themselves upon " me, and the seven others followed in a moment. I tried calling out, " but no one heard me ; I was thrown on my back, had my mouth forcibly " closed, and was threatened with a bullet if I made the least movement, " which was simply impossible. I was dragged across the wood to Raum- " bach by Luxemburg, opposite the windmill called *Beau Moulin* (Fair " Mill), where a carriage, with all the Dutch police in attendance, came " and took me in charge close to Olinger's garden, hard by the glacis. " General Goedecke came and sat in the carriage, and had a long con- " versation with me, at the end of which he sent me to prison. . . . " However, I recommend the greatest moderation. Whatever be my fate, " it is sufficient for my heart's comfort that I have not deserved it, and " I should be overwhelmed at the idea of its costing a drop of blood.

" Luxemburg Prison, April 7, 1832."

" *King vehemently desires peace, should be enough to make him* " *fix day* and hour of the occasion, for which I am very " anxious, of seeing him again.

" All is quiet here: the Dutch seem to be occupied with " the means of defence rather than attack.

" I am very desirous of being able to send ministers " soon to Berlin and Vienna: Goblet and Baron de Loë will " do.

" It is unfortunate that Périer should be in such a bad " way.

" Van de Weyer has left for London with very judicious " instructions. I will explain them to you in a few words, " but you must observe the strictest secrecy.

" We show a little of the shopkeeping spirit; that is, " we are willing to sell our advantages if the Dutch will " pay for them.

" First we must before everything else have the evacuation " of the citadel of Antwerp as a set-off against Venloo. If " after that Holland would like to purchase of us the navi- " gation of the inland waters, she has but to indemnify us so " as to enable us to get for our commerce such compensa- " tion as will allow it to enter into competition with the " commerce of other nations.

" The means suggested by us to the Conference for " bringing about a final settlement would be, first, to fix upon " a date for Holland with respect to Antwerp, after which " we would no longer pay her the arrears of the debt. Then, " after a certain day to be agreed upon there should be daily " deducted from the capital of the debt a certain amount. " This will suit the majority of the governments better " than coercion by *armed force*. At the same time it would " offer us great advantages. If it should rid us of a large " portion of the debt, our patience would be well recom-

"pensed. If the effect we desire is produced, and Holland "gives away rather than lose her money, we shall obtain a "more desirable result still more completely.

"Make all the *security* and *advantage* of this plan per- "ceptible to the King and the French government.

"Keep yourself and yours from cholera, and be per- "suaded of the sentiments I feel towards you.

"LEOPOLD.

"Germany, according to news I have received, is in a "state of fermentation which would not allow the German "powers to enter upon a war of principles."

* *Same to Same.*

"Brussels, May 16, 1832.

"Your letter of the 13th, as well as the enclosure from "the Queen,[3] has given me lively satisfaction.

"Nothing could be kinder than the Queen's letter.

"I have already answered part of your letter with refer- "ence to the religion of the children. I now authorize you "to give every assurance that it will be a great pleasure to "me to put every facility in the way of the future queen's "seeing her relatives as often as possible.

"Probably her Majesty would come from time to time "to enjoy tranquillity here and to visit her daughter.

"With reference to public affairs, the journals inform "you that there is no end to the alarm felt at the Russian "ratifications. However, they might be *better*.

"That will soon calm down.

"The address of the Chambers was rational.

"We must be prepared to make war, but we must not "provoke it.

[3] Queen Mary Amelia.

" Polish troopers and artillerymen would be a real god-
" send, especially the former.

" Try to get us some in the proportion requested last
" of all.

" I again recommend General Hurel; if the Government
" would have him ready to repair hither immediately at any
" call we might make, it would be better perhaps than get-
" ting him to come here, seeing the jealousy of the Duke of
" Wellington.

" Another way would be to get him to enter the service
" here for the duration of the war.

" I am very desirous that the interview should take place
" soon, when once the English ministry shall be clearly
" defined. The first part of the month of June would
" perhaps be the most favourable time.

" M. de Muelenaere wishes to retire, so it is probable that
" the ministry will be modified or entirely changed. There
" is no reason why this should disturb the French Govern-
" ment; it is a consequence of his weakness as a speaker.

" I intend to send Goblet to London to join Van de
" Weyer, whom I am awaiting here.

" Always with the same sentiments,

" LEOPOLD.

" P.S. Van de Weyer has just arrived, and he defends
" himself very well."

* *Same to Same.*

" Brussels, June 4, 1832.

" I say nothing of my happy arrival, as that is probably
" already known to you. I found here communications
" from London, which informed me that the King of Holland
" had given the Conference a by no means becoming reply.

" This behaviour on his part places Belgium in the position " that it is to her interest to occupy before the Conference, " that which gives her the right, she herself having done " everything to satisfy the requirements of the Conference, " to demand the execution of the treaty.

" There are two steps which seem to me likely to be the " most effective in working upon the Dutch, to station a " flotilla in the Channel, and to give us quittance of arrears " of a proportion of the debt if the Dutch do not evacuate " the Belgian territory in the province of Antwerp. You " cannot sufficiently stimulate the French Government to " forthwith concert with the English Government the mea- " sures to be taken.

" I have the assurance that the English Government " desires to conclude, and that it was M. de Talleyrand who " seemed to want to temporise.

" I think it of the highest importance for France to " terminate this Belgian question. It would double her " strength ; and if she is harassed in the west and the south, " sound policy would require, at the least, perfect security in " the north. The policy of Prince Talleyrand is sometimes " to me slightly incomprehensible. As there is no proba- " bility of the king's travelling at present, try, in conjunction " with Count Sébastiani, to get the time for the marriage " fixed for the commencement of July. This event is " ardently desired in Belgium, but there is no little fear in " consequence of the vagueness which still exists in reference " to the day.

" Give me good news before long.

" LEOPOLD."

* *Same to Same.*

"Brussels, June 17, 1832.

"I wrote to you yesterday evening with reference to the "date of celebration of the marriage, and I hope my letter "to the king will have a happy influence on his determina- "tion. It cannot be concealed that, with a view to general "policy, it is very desirable that it should take place in July "rather than in August, and I suggest that you should "carry on your system of attack with the greatest energy.

"The king desires that I should send you full powers to "seal the contract. I will lose no time in having them "forwarded to you. Repeat for ever and ever that it is "absolutely necessary for the well-being of France, Eng- "land, and Belgium, that the matter should be terminated "as soon as possible.

"With my wishes for your prosperity,

"L."

* *Same to Same.*

"Brussels, July 2, 1832.

"The decision of the Court of Appeal pained but did "not surprise me.[4] The best line of conduct, in my opinion, "would have been to put an end to the state of siege im- "mediately after the arrests, and to summon the Chambers "to give strength to the Government. I think that they "would then have given their support to the King.

"Now it will be necessary to summon the Chambers, but "in a still more deplorable state of things.

"I hope it will exercise no influence on the date fixed for "the marriage. I do not think it would be pleasant for the

[4] See *Ten Years' History*, by Louis Blanc, Vol. II. chap. vii. (trial of the accused of June, at Paris).

" marriage to take place at Paris : St. Cloud would seem to " me better calculated for it.

" All is very quiet here.

" To support our custom-house officers, I have had some " troops moved forward in the environs of Maestricht.

" If you are questioned you can set things in this point " of view.

" I have had very satisfactory news from Vienna, and " M. de Loe will soon be off.

" Send me soon some little satisfaction in your news.

" L."

* *Same to Same.*

" Brussels, July 16, 1832.

" I authorise you to make your arrangements for the " contract as you think best. It appears that in all that " concerns Belgium there is a departure from common " justice. We cannot yield any point until the citadel of " Antwerp is evacuated ; without that France and ourselves " would fall from Scylla into Charybdis.

" Ever with the same sentiments,

" LEOPOLD."

* *King Leopold to General Goblet.*

" Brussels, June 27, 1832.

" MY DEAR GOBLET,

" I must before everything express to you my satisfac- " tion at *your zeal* in the prosecution of our affairs. May I " soon be crowned with full success ! I see things as you " do, and unhappily our good Belgians here are no longer " dupes of kind words without results. The evacuation of " Antwerp is at present the chief matter ; after that we " can rest on our laurels, for the non-payment of the debt

" would be ample indemnification to us for all the other " delays.

" M. de Muelenaere is about to write to you with " reference to the indemnification to be demanded for our " war expenses from the month of January. The army " costs us three millions of florins (£256,200) a month; " that is not over much, including the expenses for field " fortifications. I have also bidden M. de Muelenaere to " write to you in clear terms, to say that when he sends you " a note it is the sense by which you are to be bound, but " that the form is left to you entirely.

" You may tell Lord Palmerston in a day or two, that " I have thought it expedient to blockade the fortress of " Maestricht: first, because the commandant has been " amusing himself with arresting and releasing our custom- " house officers according to his fancy; secondly, because he " moves about the province of Limburg, belonging to us " within a league and a half of his fort, with strong detach- " ments; thirdly, because Holland, in spite even of the treaty " of Vienna, holds the Meuse *hermetically sealed* at Maes- " tricht, and ruins the district of Liège; fourthly, because " Holland will not evacuate the citadel of Antwerp; fifthly, " this step has become indispensable as a measure of *self-* " *defence*, and the blockade will cease only when we have " obtained a result.

" With reference to the communications from Prince " Czartoryski, say it would be a pleasure to me to take " 1000 or 1200 cavalry and a few hundred artillerymen, " privates and corporals, of those which remain in Prussia. " We could not take more because we should not know " what to do with them in peace time.

" Concerning General Skrzynecki, say I desire him to " *come hither*, and the General himself *shares* this desire,

" according to a letter from him I saw the day before " yesterday. He prefers, in the first place, to come hither " without making any engagement, and he thinks that would " be the best plan for seeing about a mutual agreement. " The question is how he will get out of Austria; the only " means appear to me to be to procure him an *English* " *passport*, bringing him by way of England, whence he " could easily repair hither. On all grounds, the general " would be a great acquisition for us, poor as we are in " generals of division, of whom we have really but one.

" The King, my uncle,[5] interested himself *extremely* last " year in a Colonel Smith, born at Brugger, who is in the " English service. Try to make his acquaintance. The " King can exercise great influence on our affairs, and he " has been hitherto very good to us. I should like, there- " fore, to do something which might be agreeable to him: " it would be politic.

" Farewell. The cholera is very little about: hitherto " all is very quiet.

" LEOPOLD.

" Try to see General Sir Herbert Taylor now and then. " We ought to be able to get these Poles in the course " of July, to be of any use."

* *Same to Same.*

" Brussels, June 29, 1832.

" MY DEAR GOBLET,

" I have but a word or two to say. I have laid before " you my reasons for a stricter blockade of Maestricht. The " conduct of this General Dibbets was so insolent, that, in " the eyes of the country, there was no submitting to it any

[5] William IV., King of England.

"longer. . . . There ought to be a difference, however, "made between those who do everything to please the "Conference and those who refuse to do anything.

"If it be supposed that France advised the blockade of "Maestricht, you can say that she knows nothing about it: "it is a measure of police and internal security for our- "selves.

"Chassé is working hard at the citadel of Antwerp; a "proof he does not mean to quit it.

"Try to learn of Lord Palmerston what measures should "be taken to form diplomatic relations with Russia as well "as Spain, which interests us much on the score of "commerce.

"Heaven protect you!

"L.

"Lord Palmerston must be made to see the necessity of "the blockade of Antwerp, of which he ought to approve."

* *Same to Same.*

"Brussels, July 10, 1832.

"MY DEAR GOBLET,

"You defended yourself gallantly and acted very "wisely: I compliment you thereupon. The proposals of "Holland have something captivating in them at the first "glance. Such was the effect produced at Paris. However, "the cloven hoof soon shows itself. Your policy should be "to keep our *present* position, but to show that for a "reasonable consideration we will give up what appears to "wound the self-respect of the Dutch: the navigation of the "intermediary streams belongs chiefly to this category. My "language at Compiègne was to this effect: the citadel of "Antwerp once evacuated, we will do everything in the

" world, with proper compensation, to satisfy the Dutch. I " have begged the princesses to speak daily to the King[6] of " the evacuation of the citadel. Count Sébastiani cannot " have said otherwise, especially as I had convinced him as " well as the king, that even if we were disposed to make " fresh sacrifices, it would only bring us to inducing the King " of Holland to make some fresh and extraordinary demand.

"I do not think the Dutch would find their account in " attacking us. I have been making a round, with which I " was extremely well satisfied. On the 5th, at Malines, I " inspected the 8th regiment of the line—very fine and " strong, and three batteries of artillery; thence I went to " Fort St. Margaret. On the 6th, I inspected at Antwerp " the 6th and 5th, as well as all the Civic Guard. The same " day I inspected the 3rd Foot-Chasseurs and the 1st Lancers " at Turnhout. On the 7th I inspected the 9th and the 1st " Horse-Chasseurs at Herenthals (these two regiments are " particularly fine); and the 7th and the Eickholt battery at " Nylen. I examined Lierre, and came on in the evening " to sleep here. The troops are very fine and extremely " *well disposed.*

"The Second Division and the Ninth at present form " the advanced guard, the Third Foot-Chasseurs are on the " right towards Gheel. Langermann's Brigade will encamp " between Herenthals and Lierre. The brigadiers are good. " The First Division is somewhat extended, but its point of " support is Diest. The reserve occupies Louvain and " Brussels. The Division of Flanders is between Malines " and Termonde, and will occupy Malines. All these " troops will easily form a junction, and are exposed only " on the side of Maestricht, on the right bank. On the

[6] The King of the French is alluded to.

" other hand, the military occupation of this part of the " country inspires the inhabitants with confidence.

" If the Dutch attack us, all I should ask of France " would be cavalry, since, in such a case, the right thing " would be to seize everything possible that is Dutch in the " open field, and all succours from Prussia would arrive too " late to save them.

" The Dutch must know that the Belgian army of to-day " is different from that of last year; they cannot count so " much either on their superiority in cavalry, ours having " been considerably reinforced.

" Hasselt, which Desprez has just examined, could not " be taken without some days' siege; this is a point of " importance in resisting an attack by way of Eindhoven, " especially as they could not pass by way of Diest.

" Every day adds to our strength; the levy of twelve " battalions of reserve will be under arms at the end of the " month, and towards the end of August might be made of " service; the Sixth squadrons will soon rejoin their regi- " ments; the Seventh already have their men and horses. I " shall make it my business to bring up some large batteries " of position, consisting of twelve and eighteen pounders. " Rightly or wrongly, it is believed that the Dutch are a little " demoralised: they are disgusted, as we are, with this state of " uncertainty. After harvest, as we do not lack arms, we " shall be able to still further increase the army, and towards " the end of August deliver some grand blow.

" My marriage will take place to all appearance on the " 7th or 9th of August.

" Farewell for to-day. With firmness, and the good-will to " satisfy the Dutch on the points which wound their self- " respect, I think we shall pull through in good style.

" L."

* *Same to Same.*

(Extract.)

"Laeken, August 17, 1832.

"The great thing at present is to wait and see if "Holland is acting in good faith. My way of looking at "it is simply this: nothing more favourable for us could "happen than a chance of concluding with Holland speedily "and completely. The principal thing was to prevent any "new treaty between the five powers and Holland beyond "that of November 15th, and that seems secured. The "10th of September should now be fixed upon peremptorily "as the date. If by that time matters are not settled, we at "once demand that execution be commenced, and we will "join in it if the powers think proper.

"I am delighted with my good little queen; she is the "sweetest creature you ever saw, and she has plenty of wits. "This marriage cuts away the pretexts for partition, and the "English Government will have to try to find out new ones. "We were received with the most lively enthusiasm through-"out the country."

* *M. Van de Weyer to the King of the Belgians.*

(Extract.)

"London, August 21, 1832.

"My arrival, announced during your Majesty's stay at "Compiègne, was, with all the members of the Conference, "the signal for giving a new turn to the negotiations. "Each of them, believing me to be the bearer of positive "instructions, and to be invested with full powers, saw a "glimpse of a possibility of speedy and definite arrange-"ment with Holland and the conclusion of this troublesome "business. The resolution taken by the council the very "day of my departure, the despatches addressed to General

" Goblet, in which the ministry declared the intention of " persevering in their scheme, on the one hand, and, on the " other, the last letter addressed to Lord Palmerston,[7] and " the desire expressed to know, in an indirect manner, " the *ultimatum* of the King of Holland and the extent " of M. de Zuylen's powers; the aggregate, in short, of " all these circumstances placed me in a very difficult " and embarrassing position. Indeed, to lend an ear, even " of mere courtesy, to the means Lord Palmerston might " have suggested, was, in the eyes of General Goblet, to " swerve from the scheme, to go beyond instructions, and " to compromise the success of the position he has been for " the last three months defending. The Conference might " have taken advantage of this circumstance to return to " the course of the negotiations, and all the responsibility " would have recoiled upon me. I should have had charged " to me as a crime the most indirect endeavours to penetrate " the intentions of our adversaries. The general believed " in the necessity for his departure, to such an extent did " the least movement seem certain to exercise a disastrous " influence. I dwell upon these details because they serve to " explain what has passed in the last two days, and describe, " I think, all the embarrassment of the situation. I have " tried, therefore, to reconcile what I owe, first to the minis- " try, whose instructions (which I wish to observe faithfully) " were precise, and, second, to the fears of the General, " which it was of importance to calm, with the interests of " my country and with the desires of your Majesty. For a " whole morning I listened attentively to Lord Palmerston

[7] Information had reached Brussels that Sir Robert Adair in his correspondence insinuated that Belgium was inclined to yield. A letter was sent straight (on the 10th of August, 1832) by M. de Muelenaere to Lord Palmerston, to undeceive him.

" and the other plenipotentiaries. I believe I understood " the step they wished to be taken; but lest they should " take advantage of these interviews, and consider them as " the commencement of negotiations, I wrote *the same* " *evening* to Lord Palmerston the note of which your Ma- " jesty will find a copy herewith.[8] I saw again all the foreign " ministers, and adopted the same tone towards them; and " finally, the Conference having been convoked yesterday, " I begged Lord Palmerston not to insist on my presence, " seeing, I said to him, that my arrival made no change in " previous instructions, and that I could not take part in " any discussion not having for its object the realization of " the views of the cabinet of Brussels.

" But I cannot conceal from your Majesty that the " surprise and disappointment were very great. Lord " Palmerston expressed himself with a warmth and a vivacity

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[8] " *M. Van de Weyer to Lord Palmerston.*

" London, August 18, 1832.

" I have given mature reflection, my lord, to the conversation I had " the honour of holding with you this morning, and I have since received " your summons to the Conference on Monday. It is of importance " that I should again recall to your lordship's remembrance the *personal* " position of King Leopold towards Belgium, and that of the Ministry " towards the Chambers. Solemn engagements have been entered upon " on both sides; a promise has been given not to open negotiations " afresh before the evacuation of territory has taken place. This evacua- " tion is a *guarantee* which the king had a right to demand. Nothing " has come to pass since to convince us that this guarantee was useless: " Everything, on the contrary, seems to show that King William has no " wish to conclude. The Belgian ministry, therefore, must persevere " in the course they have traced out for themselves, and this it is that " has decided them not to give other instructions. I would recall, also, " to your kind recollection, the last words of the king at Tournay, and " the idea he bade me communicate to you. . . . .

" Accept, etc."

" which prove how much importance he attaches to nego-
" tiation. . . .

" I reminded him of what your Majesty wrote from
" Compiègne, and of what you had the goodness to repeat
" to me at Tournay, to wit, that your Majesty wished that
" all should be concluded by the 10th of September, and
" in any case Holland's ratifications and the evacuation of
" territory should take place forthwith.

" Lord Palmerston spoke to me of a plan suggested by
" the Emperor of Russia to Lord Durham, for bringing
" about the evacuation of the citadel of Antwerp : to have
" the place occupied by English troops, to whom Holland
" would consent to capitulate.

" I answered his lordship at once that the Constitution
" was formally opposed to such a thing, and that the minister
" who should authorize such occupation would undoubtedly
" be impeached. But, he said, if we employ coercive
" measures, temporary occupation would be inevitable.
" Agreed, I replied ; ' but the moment you were masters of
" ' the place, we should come, treaty in hand, and demand
" ' of you evacuation of a territory of which you have guaran-
" ' teed to us the possession.' "

* *King Leopold to General Goblet.*

" Laeken, August 31, 1832.

" MY DEAR GOBLET,

" Our position is pretty clearly defined. We must hear
" the proposals of Holland : if she offer an acceptable and
" speedy end, accept ; if they be perfidious, reject them and
" insist upon the treaty. It is thus that the Government
" understands the matter. If Holland is willing to yield on
" the points which are important to us, we will come to
" terms about the liquidation of the syndicate. A new and

" long negotiation, however, is neither admissible nor neces-
" sary. The whole affair might be managed in a few days.
" The *status quo* is too dear for us, especially as we are
" paying debt and troops at the same time. The army must
" either be *reduced* or *soon made use of.* I think that to
" make use of it would force the Powers to come for once
" to a conclusion about the matter. Farewell: may you for
" once have good news to give us.

" L."

* *M. Le Hon to General Goblet, Minister of Foreign Affairs.*

" Paris, October 12, 1832.

" . . . I lost no time this morning in seeing the Duke
" de Broglie, the king (at Neuilly), and the English ambas-
" sador. With each I insisted strongly upon the absolute
" necessity of energetic measures on the part either of
" France and England, or one of them, or of the Belgian
" Government. The minister, having bid me observe that
" the solution of this question depended a great deal on that
" of knowing whether there still remained to the King of
" the Belgians any possible means of restraining the im-
" patience of the nation, furnished me with the natural
" opportunity of declaring to him that all means of tempori-
" sation were exhausted; that in a few days—by the 20th
" of October at the latest—the Belgian Government, in
" default of action on the part of the Powers, would be
" forced to act, and without any doubt would act. The
" Duke de Broglie seemed to me sensible of his position:
" the speedy evacuation of Antwerp is in his eyes, and,
" according to the formal avowal he made to me, a question
" of French as much as of Belgian interest. His conclusion
" may be briefly put thus: We will act, and at once, if
" England consents. The English ambassador allowed to

" pierce through the veil of his diplomatic reserve a gleam " of a desire and even hope that our appeal, supported by " the report and opinion of Lord Durham, may decide the " English Cabinet to take an energetic resolution. He " shares the opinion that the composition of the new " ministry, and the security it gives the Powers, will have a " happy influence in London. My precise declarations " about the state of the country, about the urgent necessity " for bringing things to an issue, about our intention to con- " clude by ourselves, if our supports failed us; finally, about " the impossibility of forming a Belgian ministry which would " not demand as its first condition an attack on the enemy " to force him to evacuate the territory: all this seemed to " me to have great influence on his mind.

" The king has shown more disposition for vigorous " measures than I expected. A council of his ministers was " held at 1 o'clock, to deliberate upon this subject. The " king gave me permission to see him again towards " 4 o'clock, to ascertain the result. This is it: ' The " ' council unanimously resolved to propose to the English " ' Cabinet to procure the immediate evacuation of Antwerp " ' and of the two ports belonging to us on the Scheldt, by " ' means of a French army under the command of Marshal " ' Gérard. This army not to occupy any fortified place; " ' to proceed straight to the object of the expedition; to " ' hand over to the Belgian troops the citadel and the forts " ' as fast as the Dutch leave them or are driven out of " ' them; and to retire into France after accomplishing its " ' mission. The French ministry demands of the British " ' Cabinet a categorical and prompt reply, and announces " ' to it that if the proposal is accepted, the French army " ' shall enter Belgium on the spot.—It proposes also that " ' the combined squadron shall cruise at the mouth of the

" ' Scheldt, or in those waters, and in case of resistance on
" ' the part of the King of Holland make captures of Dutch
" ' vessels.'

" The courier, bearer of this resolution, starts this even-
" ing. M. de Talleyrand went away quite decided, I am
" assured, to urge the evacuation of Antwerp. The Broglie
" ministry being to a great extent his work, he will naturally
" espouse its vital interests, and this ministry, in the opinion
" of nearly everybody, cannot last the session if it cannot
" rely for support on some act which will satisfy the national
" honour or public opinion. This may explain Prince
" Talleyrand's zeal in seconding this time our most ardent
" desire."

* *Letter of the Duke de Broglie, addressed to Count de Latour-Maubourg, Minister of France at Brussels, and transmitted by the latter, on the 18th of Oct., 1832, to the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs.*

" SIR, " Paris, Oct. 17, 1832.

" Although we do not yet know the definitive result of
" the deliberations entered upon in London with reference
" to the means of terminating the Belgian question, the
" certainty of having soon to apply the measures which
" shall have been agreed upon to that end between France
" and England imposes upon us the duty of being prepared
" at once with the means of executing them. We have had
" to provide for the case in which, by agreement with the
" British Cabinet, a French army should enter Belgium for
" the purpose of forcing the Dutch to evacuate the citadel
" of Antwerp. I have already told you that, on this
" hypothesis, it would be of the highest importance that the
" Belgians should abstain from taking part in our operations.
" Had there been any need of our being confirmed in this

" view, founded on such peremptory reasons, a letter from " our chargé d'affaires at the Hague, of which I send you a " copy, and which I beg you to bring to the knowledge of " the Cabinet of Brussels, would have completely dispersed " all our doubts.[9] You will there see that this inaction of " the Belgians is, of all combinations, that which would most " upset the policy of King William, all whose calculations it " would baffle. This being so, our first care must be to " prevent, to keep aside whatever might occasion a collision " of any sort between the Dutch and the Belgians, and " might thus bring about the complications so earnestly " desired by the Cabinet of the Hague. It is evident that " the most certain plan for attaining this end would be that, " at the approach of our troops, the Belgians should sur- " render to them all the positions they at this moment " occupy, as well in the city of Antwerp as in the stretch of " territory to which the operations of the siege must extend, " and should concentrate their forces to the right of our " army, so as to cover, in a manner, one of its flanks, and " so as to be able to take at a later period the attitude " which fresh circumstances might suggest to them. In this " sense will be conceived the naturally more detailed instruc- " tions which the Government will address, on the case

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[9] *The Marquis d'Eyragues to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, at Paris.*

"The Hague, October 12, 1832.

"I have heard indirectly that Prussia, in case we should be obliged "to lay siege to the citadel of Antwerp, would desire that the Belgian " army should take no part in the military operations. Without antici- " pating the determinations of the King's Government in this respect, " it seems to me useful to let your Excellency know that here, where the " proposal is already known, there is extreme fear of seeing it adopted. " It would derange many calculations, and would place the Government " of the Netherlands in a position it did not foresee, and of which it does " not disguise from itself the difficulties."

" occurring, to Marshal Gérard, to put him on an under-
" standing with the Belgian Cabinet, etc."

* *General Goblet to M. Le Hon.*

" Brussels, October 19, 1832.

" . . . . The French Government makes two demands:
" 1st. Inaction on the part of our troops during the expedi-
" tion; 2nd. Preliminary evacuation of the forts and other
" positions which the Belgian troops occupy in the city
" of Antwerp. I quite appreciate the reasons which the
" Duke dè Broglie has put forward as to the former point;
" I have for a long time past been convinced that our army
" must, to keep up for the expedition of the Powers the
" character of a European mission, resign itself to inaction,
" unless the Dutch troops resume hostilities on other points:
" it must be perfectly understood that the inaction, painful
" enough, as it is, for our army, is not to interdict them from
" the right of legitimate defence, in case of aggression or
" infraction of territory. Finally, to give quite a clear idea
" of our proper part, I say that our army must be considered
" as co-operating in the siege by interposing itself between
" Antwerp and the Dutch frontier: in this situation it will
" remain a mere witness of the siege of the citadel at the
" same time that it is quite ready to repulse any direct attack
" upon itself.

" It is impossible for me to share the opinion of the
" Duke de Broglie on the second point. We must continue
" to occupy the forts and batteries in Antwerp and on the
" banks of the Scheldt; we could not evacuate them with-
" out alarming the country, without exposing a system of
" inaction, which, with whatever discretion it may be accom-
" panied, in whatever obscurity it may hide itself, will at
" once excite loud outcries and wound the national self-

" respect. There would be grave imprudence in this " evacuation.

" I must add, besides, that so long as General Chassé " shall confine himself to repulsing the outer blockade " undertaken by the French, our batteries in the interior of " the city will remain inactive ; but if, contrary to received " customs and the law of nations, the Dutch general takes " advantage of the external attack to bombard the city, " inaction will have to cease on our part, for we should be " placed where it would be a case of legitimate defence.

" I have reason to believe that this view will satisfy the " French Cabinet: it is of course understood that this " promise of inaction is made on the hypothesis of the " intervention of the Powers, quite decided as we are to take " the initiative in hostilities if within a short space France " do not reply by deeds to our appeal."

* *Same to M. Van de Weyer.*

" I lose no time in transmitting to you herewith a copy " of a letter I am sending to M. Le Hon, by way of answer " to a communication made to me by Count Latour- " Maubourg on behalf of the Duke de Broglie. You will " remark that as to the second point I have abstained from " declaring the real reason of our refusal: the evacuation of " the forts and batteries that we occupy in the city of " Antwerp and on the banks of the Scheldt would be impo- " litic, seeing that the occupation of these forts and batteries " by the French would from henceforth give umbrage to some " extent to the Powers, and especially to England. It must " be well understood in Europe that if the French besiege " and take the citadel of Antwerp, it is not to occupy it " themselves but to place it in our hands : the idea suggested " by the occupation of the forts and batteries in the city by

" French troops appears to me of a nature to alarm the " English populations and to reawaken old apprehensions."

* *The Minister of Foreign Affairs to MM. Van de Weyer and Le Hon.*

"Brussels, October 21, 1832.

"The King, convinced that at the point at which the " negotiations have arrived it was necessary for him to " support himself by vigorous and homogeneous action at " home, has put an end to a state of things which could not " be prolonged without danger. His Majesty has accepted, " by decree dated yesterday, the resignations given in by " MM. de Theux, Raikem, and Coghen, as long ago as " September 16, and has appointed M. Lebeau Minister of " Justice and M. C. Rogier Minister of the Interior; pro- " vision will be made with the least possible delay for the " appointment of a Minister of Finance. General Baron " Evain remains Minister-Director of War; Count de " Mérode, the Chevalier de Theux de Meylandt and M. de " Muelenaere keep the title of Minister of State.

" The new ministry was formed and takes position under " very precise and rigorous conditions, which spring, as neces- " sary consequences, from the situation of the country and " the scheme of external policy followed since my entrance " upon office.

" By the avowal of the Powers, the obstacle which the " Government of the Netherlands contrived to create by the " offer of direct negotiation no longer exists; France and " Great Britain cannot any longer by pleas in bar, and under " pretext that there is still a last means of conciliation, refuse " to do justice to the appeal that we reiterated on the 5th " of October.

" The King, on signing the twenty-four Articles, accepted,

" by an additional Article—Art. 25—the guarantee which the " Powers had offered to Belgium, from the 15th of October, " whilst reserving to themselves the task and undertaking " the business of getting those Articles executed.

" We have demanded the accomplishment of this " guarantee; but if France and Great Britain declined to " grant our demand, either expressly or implicitly by remain- " ing inactive, there would remain for us nothing but to " undertake all by ourselves the execution of the treaty. " For the Powers might at the same time refuse to execute " the treaty by the employment of coercive measures on " their part, and deny us the right of attempting its execution " by our own forces.

" Full of faith in the assurances which had been given " us, we abstained, in the declaration of October 5, from " fixing a date, at the expiration whereof, in case the " guaranteeing Powers remained inactive, we must consider " ourselves as abandoned to ourselves, and no longer count " on the guarantee.

" To avoid having lost in vain hesitation the few days " which separate us from the period of the year when the " employment of coercive measures becomes impossible, the " King, on the advice of his Council, charges you to declare to " the Duke de Broglie (or to Lord Palmerston) that he does " not think it possible to remain in expectation beyond the 3rd " of November next; if this day arrives without the stipulated " guarantee having been put in execution, or at least in " process of execution, His Majesty will see himself under " the necessity of putting himself by his own forces in " possession of the territory occupied by the enemy, and of " thus putting a stop to a state of intolerable uneasiness. " The guarantee of the Powers becoming illusory, Belgium " would be, by inevitable necessity, reduced to this last

" extremity; and we must have courage to run all the risks " of this position.

" One of two things, then: on the 3rd of November " either the citadel of Antwerp will be evacuated, or on the " point of being, in consequence of the avowed intervention " or beginning of intervention of the Powers, or assuredly, " on that day, the Belgian army will prepare to expel the " enemy from the territory to which our right was recognised " by the treaty of November 15, which has become the " public law of Belgium and the Powers.

" The ministry cannot exist beyond the 3rd of November " unless one or other of these suppositions be realised: in " the interest of general repose, and for the honour of the " Powers, it desires that the former may be accomplished; " but, failing this, it will not recoil before the duties which " it takes upon itself; it will act on its own account, not " only because it has undertaken to do so, but also because " it will have been driven thereto by force of circumstances.

" I have now explained to you the views of the new " Cabinet. You will make these present instructions the " substance of a verbal notice to the Duke de Broglie (or Lord " Palmerston), throwing into it all the moderation suitable; " you will take care above all to manage so that our reso- " lution be not considered as a threat, the effect of which " might be retarded by a few promises: this resolution has " been imposed upon us by the internal state of the country, " which we clearly appreciate without being under any sort " of illusion; and we have thereby come to feel the con- " viction that it would be better to run the risk of a resump- " tion of hostilities than that of a prolongation of the " *status quo.* We feel it impossible to govern and to appear " before the Chambers, the meeting whereof, according to " the terms of the fundamental law, takes place at the latest

" on the thirteenth of next month, except on the conditions " brought to your cognisance in the name of the whole " Cabinet.

" Accept, etc.

" GOBLET."

King Leopold to General Duprez, Chief of Staff of the Belgian Army.[10]

" Brussels, November 30, 1832.

" MY DEAR GENERAL,

" No doubt the part given us to play is not one of the " most amusing. It is even a little humiliating.

" I repair, however, to Lierre, that I may be nearer. " The Orangemen make out that Chassé is going to fire on " the city; they hope so—the kind creatures, and flatter " themselves *that is the true aim of his resistance.*

" I don't believe it; but as long as that is not quite " plain, I should like to be near those of my children who " will find themselves most exposed to danger.

" I think of being at Lierre at four o'clock. Give *strict* " orders not to commence firing on the citadel, even in " reply, without your *own positive* orders; without that " there might be a want of discretion.

" Farewell: the weather is getting settled. As ever,

" L."

Same to Same.

" Lierre, December 2, 1832, 9 o'clock.

" MY DEAR GENERAL,

" The marshal appeared to me a little discouraged " yesterday. My brother-in-law also has written to me that " Haxo was very kind, but that that did not shake you.

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[10] *See* the *Conservative* (Utrecht, 1868), pp. 141, *seq.*

" A man *so honourable and good as you are* can only " *despise* men who, in important positions, have so little " *bearing*.

" What was decided yesterday is all right: the citadel " will be blockaded by the river, use will be made of " Fort Montebello, and some French troops will be admitted " *pro formâ* into the Northern fort. I quite see that it " would be preferable to make the principal attack on the " city side.

" But I must repeat, as the present expedition is only " for the purpose of taking the citadel, and we shall after- " wards pursue our course all alone, I have *no idea of having* " *the city* destroyed. As for *that*, we could do it without the " French.

" I am sorry they are stuck in the mud; but they have " at their disposal all the joists of the Baltic: they can, for " foot-passage, lay down planks, of which there are enough " and to spare. Why do they not make use of these " means? . . .

" It will be necessary to make known to the Regency " that the paternal kindnesses of King William, who puts " me much in mind of the sham mother in the judgment of " Solomon, are probably preparing trouble for them. It is " better that the inhabitants should no longer cherish " illusions. The losses would only be the greater. Fare- " well, my dear general, if you have folks who make your " blood boil, believe in compensation that I am attached to " you, and esteem you sincerely.

" L."

Same to Same.

" Brussels, December 16, 1832, morning.

" They say the plan of Prussia is, after the departure of " the French troops, to take possession of Venloo. We

" are under an engagement here to cede Venloo, but only " when Belgian territory shall have been evacuated.

" The Government is determined, in this case, to defend " Venloo. I have told them that if they are to defend it at " all, then it must be defended as soon as possible.

" You have Dessin at hand at Antwerp. Ask him once " more what he conscientiously thinks about it. According " to his account, it appears to me that Fort St. Michael " should be the true key of the position. Further, the " garrison is not very strong. We must send thither the " partisans or a battalion of the 11th.

" The Government being convinced that the country " would take it ill if Venloo were abandoned without a " completely satisfactory account being given, it becomes " essential to make a vigorous defence.

" I share your opinion about Fort St. Maria and the " Cross, which must be rendered safe from a sudden dash. " I shall await your answer about Venloo. It is above all " things necessary to do nothing which may be injurious to " Belgian military reputation.

" I start on Tuesday morning, without fail.

" L."

The Prince of Orange to General Chassé.

(In French.)

Confidential.

" Tilburg, December 14, 1832.

" MY DEAR GENERAL,

" I cannot deny myself the pleasure of penning you a " few words to inform you that your reports up to the 12th " of this month, at 6 P.M., reached me quite safely, and I " have read them with the most lively interest and with 'real " 'admiration.' Your defence appears to me conducted to

" perfection, and the courage and intrepidity of the garrison " in the midst of all that it must have to endure deserves the " highest praise; even the enemy cannot refuse to render " justice to the obstinate resistance it meets with and which " its losses prove. The defence of the citadel of Antwerp " will furnish a glorious page in the military history of our " country, and a noble example to cite to our army, when " my turn shall come to be attacked by the forces which " surround you. For I consider myself also, being on the " defensive, as commander of a large fortress, of which our " rivers are the ditches, and our fortified places the out- " works. You know that in such a position we could not, " without great danger to the place, run the risk of loss in " numerous sorties, and get too far from the main works, " especially when the besiegers are very superior in number " to the garrison and there is a corps of observation ready " to support them.

" There unhappily is the cause that paralyses me and pre- " vents me from flying to the assistance of the gallant men " who are fighting under your orders with heroic courage. " It makes me 'more than sad,' but you are too good a " general not to appreciate my position and that which pru- " dence imperiously demands of me. Your brave troops " will have done a great service to the army by proving to " the French that our soldiers are not intimidated by " numbers, and that, whilst they commit themselves to the " Divine protection, they are not dazzled by the ancient " glories of France.

" Your ever devoted,

" WILLIAM, PRINCE OF ORANGE.

" P.S. Be good enough to communicate these lines to your " council of defence. My three sons will take this letter to " Bath."

* *M. Behr to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.*

"Washington, April 18, 1834.

". . . . On arriving in this country, I perceived to my "surprise that, in spite of the friendly and kindly behaviour "of the Government in respect to me, there existed against "Belgium and her revolution secret prepossessions spreading "more or less throughout all classes of society. After "investigation, I discovered that the journals of New York "made underhand but constant war upon us. Extracts "from letters pretending to be written from Europe, articles "taken from Tory journals, certain perfidious remarks "thrown out at haphazard as it were, such were the weapons "employed against us—weapons the more dangerous, inas- "much as the papers of New York are in general the best, "and best edited in the Union, and as their columns are the "stores to which the other editors have recourse to provide "themselves with all their foreign intelligence. Thus, an "article, published against us in London, was successfully "reproduced in all the principal papers of America. The "motives for their hostility are easy to comprehend. New "York was founded and peopled originally by the Dutch. "Many Dutch families are still extant there, and preserve a "great predilection for the country of their ancestors. "Further, the Dutch chargé d'affaires was a resident in the "city. . . . Wishing to counteract the manœuvres of the "Dutch party, I made choice of the two most influential "papers in New York, the *Courier and Inquirer*, which is "the chief organ of the banking interest, and the *Albion*, "which plays here the same part as the *Court Journal* in "London. Not being able to buy them with money, I re- "solved to win them by politeness. . . . . Insensibly the "tone of these two papers changed. . . . ."

* *King Leopold to M. Le Hon.*

"Laeken, January 29, 1833.

"With reference to the liberal manner in which it is "intended to act towards us in respect of what remains to "be arranged as to the definitive treaty, I must say that the "scheme has been so broadly followed that it is worth "while to put together all that is taken from us as well as "all the losses with which Belgium has been accommodated "since she found herself, by the armistice of 1830, under "the p r o t e c t i o n of the Powers:

"1st. Sealing up of the Meuse;

"2nd. Impediments on the Scheldt;

"3rd. Losses, by fire and inundation in 1831, caused by "the aggression of Holland.

"By the treaty we are deprived:

"1st. Of the share of the sinking fund of the last fifteen "years, which amounts to a considerable sum;

"2nd. Of an indemnification for Belgium's share in the "expenses of the colonies which remain to Holland;

"3rd. The fleet which remains to her;

"4th. In respect of our domains sold in favour of the "syndicate.

"The separation further deprives our fabrics of the only "certain outlet which they had up to the present time. In "spite of these losses we have imposed upon us the "immense sum of 8, 400,000 florins (717,500*l.*) a year, and "they begin by making us pay arrears from the end of "1830 up to January, 1832. They take away our territory, "and give us the most miserable of all frontiers on the side "of Germany.

"So that the result for us is that we have to pay one of "the most considerable of tributes, and are deprived even of

" the means of filling up the void left by this exportation of " specie, having *really* no export trade.

" King Louis Philip had laid it down as a principle that " Belgium ought at the least to be no worse off, in her " present state, than she was under Dutch government. " With that declaration it was that we parted at Lille. But, " to speak truth, it cannot be denied that the Belgium of " now will be *far worse off* than that which was united to " Holland. And that *solely* by the unjust pecuniary losses " imposed upon us.

" If we could devote three millions a year to re-establish- " ing our export trade, now ruined by the separation, we " should easily manage, but, situated as we shall be, I do " not see how we shall get along, and the Orangemen have " reason to cry out as they do.

" We owe all this to the liberal manner in which we " have been sacrificed to Holland. For we are besides " deprived of direct communication with Germany; and the " Scheldt, which cannot now without the internal waters " struggle with Holland, will have the infliction of a toll " to make matters easier. I count above everything on " the fairness of the English Government, which will sign " nothing—at least I hope so—without my consent.

" You will do well to watch over all that passes to " prevent our being constantly sacrificed. . . . Believe me " always with the same sentiments,

" LEOPOLD."

* *King Leopold to Louis Philip, King of the French.*

" Brussels, March 5, 1833.

" MY VERY DEAR BROTHER AND EXCELLENT FRIEND,

" I have seen with horror that in London a disposition " has been shown to adopt annex No. 2 of the note of " February 14. How King William could have originally " refused this annex No. 2 is to me *utterly incomprehensible* " since by it he obtained the removal of the embargo with- " out having for that purpose made a single step more " towards the solution of affairs or a definitive treaty. All " the advantages were on his side, and Belgium, tied hand " and foot, obtained the immense benefit of seeing her " neutrality recognised by Holland. A precious boon, " really !

" I beg you to read once more annex No. 2, and I " proceed to point out in a few words its contents :

" *Art.* 1. Immediate removal of the embargo. Resti- " tution of freights, &c.

" *Art.* 2. Discharge of Dutch taken at Antwerp.

" *Art.* 3. Recognition of the neutrality of Belgium.

" *Art.* 4. This is so fine that I break off to transcribe " it in its entirety :

" ' The high contracting parties undertake to occupy " ' themselves *without delay* with the definitive treaty " ' which must regulate the relations between the King " ' of the Netherlands and Belgium. They will invite the " ' courts of Austria, Prussia, and Russia to co-operate " ' therein.'

" *Art.* 5. Exchange of ratifications within ten days in " London.

" By this proposition, there would be, on one side,

" removal of the embargo, and blockade on the other; the " only sacrifice on the part of H.M. of Holland would be " recognition of Belgian neutrality. As for the definitive, " after an arrangement of *that nature*, there would naturally " be *nothing at all.* Holland, whilst placing her army on a " less costly footing, would remain mistress of the Scheldt, " the Meuse, the routes towards Germany, etc., and all " this without recognition of Belgium, which the King " might consider as belonging to him, only as a neutral " part of the kingdom.

" The only thing which can make any impression on the " minds of the Dutch is the embargo; this embargo re- " moved, they have the monopoly of trade, and laugh at all " else; a definitive treaty is *not* necessary to them. Their " debt is so tremendous that it may be a matter of indiffer- " ence to them, especially to the King, whether they pay " a few millions more or less; I beg you to consider in " what a position this would place the Belgian Govern- " ment!

" And what have you obtained by the Antwerp expe- " dition and all other sacrifices? The result of seeing " things in a worse state than in 1831. This is the only " result I can perceive.

" In such case my line of conduct is traced out: the " intention of King William is to wait, and by waiting ruin " the Belgian Government in all ways. If the embargo is " removed without any result for this country, I shall attack " Holland. I should prefer in this case committing political " suicide to leading the miserable life which would be " prepared for me if I submitted to this annex No. 2.

" I implore you *to take this matter seriously in hand:* its " importance is great.

" I hope that in a few days I shall see our good Queen. " and I beg you to believe me for life,

" My dearly beloved Father,

" Your faithfully devoted Friend and Son-in-Law,

" LEOPOLD."

N.B. This unpublished and autograph letter was found in the Tuileries in 1848.

CHAPTER II.

1833—1839.

BELGIUM AND HOLLAND—NEGOTIATIONS BROKEN OFF—KING LEOPOLD'S DOMESTIC TROUBLES—GENERAL GOBLET AND THE KING OF HOLLAND—THE FORMER DENOUNCED AS A DESERTER FROM THE DUTCH SERVICE—COMPLICATIONS—BIRTH OF THE DUKE DE BRABANT—TROUBLES IN SPAIN—PRINCESS VICTORIA BECOMES QUEEN OF ENGLAND—THE QUEEN AND PRINCE ALBERT—TREATY OF APRIL 19—CORRESPONDENCE.

If Leopold, content with the advantages assured to him by the convention of May 21st, no longer wished to hurry the conclusion of a definitive treaty with Holland, he, nevertheless, could not escape an essential stipulation of this convention. It had been said that the high contracting parties undertook to give their attention without delay to the definitive treaty which was to fix the relations between the dominions of the King of the Netherlands, Grand Duke of Luxem-

burg, and Belgium. Consequently the plenipotentiaries of England and France concerted measures with their colleagues of Austria, Prussia, and Russia, and the Conference held a fresh meeting in London, July 15th, 1833. M. Verstolk de Soelen, Minister of Foreign Affairs of King William I., came to join M. Salomon Dedel, as plenipotentiary from the Netherlands; and on the other side, General Goblet, Minister of Foreign Affairs of King Leopold, rejoined M. Van de Weyer. "It is now for the Dutch," wrote King Leopold, "to come out with their pro-"posals, and for us not to accept them if they "are onerous, as they will be to a dead certainty."[1]

These previsions were to be realised. The Dutch plenipotentiaries raised excessive claims in respect of the navigation of the Scheldt, at the same time that they demanded integral payment of the arrears of the debt, starting from the 1st of November, 1830, taking no account of the enormous charges which had fallen on Belgium in consequence of King William's non-execution of the treaty of the twenty-four articles. "The

[1] King Leopold to M. Le Hon, Brussels, June 18, 1833.

" position of the Belgian plenipotentiaries," wrote King Leopold to General Goblet,[2] " requires the " greatest wariness, to avoid being duped afresh " by foreign diplomacy. Holland, in dealing " with us, follows the policy in vogue at the time " of the Regent and Alberoni. . . . . It is all " right provided you can embroil matters and " gain time." The King was likewise displeased with the French ministry: he knew from good sources that the cabinet, with the exception of the Duke de Broglie, felt great slackness in relation to the dearest interests of Belgium. What gave him a little hope was the declaration reiterated by Louis Philip, that he would not ratify any stipulation which had not previously received the sanction and approbation of the King of the Belgians.

Seconded to perfection by his plenipotentiaries in London, Leopold defended with great perseverance the rights of Belgium. He even drew up with his own hand voluminous memoranda on the most arduous questions, arrears of debt, the navigation of the Scheldt, etc. His con-

[2] King Leopold to General Goblet, Laeken, July 22, 1833.

stant recommendation was: "Stick to Lord "Palmerston's theme." Although the conference had already been by way of suspecting the apparent willingness of the Court of the Hague to come to an arrangement, it supported, however, some of the Dutch pretensions, notably the maintenance of the arrears of debt to the detriment of Belgium. This support galled and vexed King Leopold. "Really," he said, "if it "were a treaty with negroes on one of the coasts "of Africa, men would be ashamed to put forward "such unfair pretensions. . . . . I commend to "notice, in conclusion, the resources of our poor "country. If the powers do not wish Belgium "to fall into the clutches of powerful neighbours, "let them treat her fairly: in no way have we "failed in our engagements; let them also con-"form thereto. . . . ."[3] There was even a time when his patience appeared exhausted. "Very "often," he then wrote, "I am tempted to fire "the magazine, for the treatment I have had to "experience is beyond the maximum of patience "granted by heaven to men. For two years I

[3] King Leopold to General Goblet, Laeken, August 12, 1833.

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" have been left personally in the most humiliat-
" ing position, with scarcely a thing fulfilled of
" all that was promised me. . . . ."[4]

But already the negotiations were broken off. King William had promised to take with the agnates of the House of Nassau and with the Germanic Confederation the steps indispensable for the exchange of territories such as was stipulated in the treaty of the twenty-four articles. Well, an abrupt question put by Lord Palmerston to the Dutch plenipotentiaries was followed by an answer proving clearly that the King of the Netherlands had no design of concluding a definitive arrangement with Belgium. Before quitting London, General Goblet, in conjunction with M. Van de Weyer, addressed on the 28th of September to the Conference a note, in which the responsibility of the rupture was energetically attributed to the Cabinet of the Hague. The Conference, on its side, gave the Belgian plenipotentiaries an assurance that they had correctly indicated the incidents which had fettered the negotiations.

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[4] King Leopold to General Goblet, August 30, 1833.

If the King of the Belgians complained of the slackness of the French Cabinet, he nevertheless kept up the most affectionate relations with Louis Philip and his family. "The queen, my "mother-in-law," he wrote, March the 22nd, "was much pleased with Belgium." Above all he had great confidence in the Duke d'Orleans, and kept up a confidential correspondence with him.

In November following King Leopold and Queen Louise, having come to Paris, were present at the evening dancing-party which, to use contemporary language, was offered by the National Guard to the Royalties of France and Belgium in the magnificent Opera House.

But the spring of 1834 was a sad one for King Leopold. He had a presentiment of some great domestic calamity; and this, as he said, often rendered him quite indisposed to engage in business. At the beginning of March there had been serious disquietude about the health of the Prince Royal, born on the 24th of the preceding July; but by degrees the danger seemed to be receding and disappearing. On the 13th of May, however, the king wrote:—"Doctor Clark, in whom

" I have the greatest confidence, has been good " enough to leave his numerous patients to come " here: he found the child so reduced and so " weak that it is impossible to answer for the " future. The saddest part of it is that he was " such a strong, fine child, and that, had he been " some peasant's son, he would probably be fresh " and healthy now; but, thanks to timidity and " ignorance, inflammation of the mucous mem- " brane has been allowed to set in. At the begin- " ning of the year the most ordinary care would " have sufficed—now, God knows if there be any " hope."[5] The king's presentiment was realized; the young prince died at the palace of Laeken, on the 16th of May. Leopold was for the moment overwhelmed. "He is crushed and afflicted," said a witness of his profound grief, " to a degree " which would touch the hardest heart."

The nation, also, was deeply moved. Many members of the chamber of representatives were for begging the king to secure the contingent succession to the throne by using the right the constitution gave him. It was desired that his

[5] King Leopold to M. Le Hon, May 13, 1834.

choice should fall on one of his nephews, sons of Duke Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg-Kohary. But the project was not carried out.

The illness of the Prince Royal was coincident with some deplorable events.

On the 6th of April Brussels was the scene of serious disorders.

Defied and exasperated by certain Orange manifestations, and feebly restrained by the municipal police, the people proceeded to sack some of the wealthiest houses in the neighbourhood of the park. Sir Robert Adair, the English minister, having with indignation witnessed these acts of violence which disturbed the quiet of Sunday, repaired to the palace, and told the king what he had seen. Leopold did not hesitate: he mounted his horse, and followed by some officers, repaired to the scene of disorder. Contemporaries relate that a few energetic words from him sufficed to stop the plunder. They say that everywhere the people, leaving the houses of the Orangemen, greeted him with warm acclamations, and that everywhere order seemed to spring up again as if by magic.* It was, however, but a short lull. No sooner was the king gone than the plunderers re-

commenced their work. To put a stop to these shocking scenes, the government was obliged to take the place in certain respects of the municipal power.[6]

A diplomatic incident, very unexpected, had also occurred to increase still further King Leopold's annoyances. General Goblet had, on the 27th of December, 1833, resigned the portfolio of Foreign Affairs: he was to repair to Berlin, where his nomination as envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary of the King of the Belgians had been approved of long since. Indeed, Frederick William III. replying, July 5th, 1832, to a letter from King Leopold, had not only expressed a wish to be able to form with Belgium diplomatic relations which should be direct and continuous, but had also given his assent to the choice of General Goblet in the capacity of minister plenipotentiary. "As General Goblet," he said, "has his sovereign's confidence, I have no doubt "he will earn mine by his wisdom and his "moderation, and I shall lose no time in ac- "crediting to your majesty a minister of similar

[6] See *Belgium under the Reign of Leopold I.*, by Thonissen (Louvain, 1861), vol. ii., p. 176, *seq.*

" character, and in thus establishing more inti-
" mate relations with you." The King of Prussia, in point of fact, did accredit to the Court of Brussels Baron Arnim; but General Goblet, having been sent to the Conference of London, to become afterwards Minister of Foreign Affairs, had his place at Berlin provisionally supplied by General de Mercx. When General Goblet had voluntarily resigned the portfolio of Foreign Affairs, his former colleagues pressed him warmly to take the position for which he had been intended the preceding year. He yielded to their urgency, and at the beginning of 1834, Captain Beaulieu, his aide-de-camp, having been appointed Secretary of Legation, started for Berlin, to precede his chief there for a few weeks in the capacity of chargé d'affaires. The appointment of General Goblet had been very well received in Germany; it was, according to the *Augsburg Gazette*, a measure of good augury for the ulterior relations of the new kingdom with the Prussian cabinet. "We cherish," it said, "a
" hope that, by the intervention of this states-
" man, the Germans will stretch forth the hand
" of friendship to Belgium, that she may not be

" obliged to give herself up entirely to France, " contrary to her own interests, and, as every one " must agree, contrary to the interests of Ger- " many, and consequently of all Europe." But the *Augsburg Gazette* did not take into account the resentment of the Hague. There they had never forgiven General Goblet for the eminent services he had rendered to independent Belgium, and they preserved a bitter recollection of that energetic note which, on the 28th of September preceding, had closed the last useless labours of the Conference of London. It was remembered that General Goblet, aide-de-camp of King Leopold, inspector-general of fortifications and of the engineer corps, ex-Minister of Foreign Affairs, had less than three years before been a captain of engineers in the service of the Netherlands. The alliances which united the Houses of Prussia and Orange of course favoured the adversaries of the Belgian revolution; the Queen of Holland was a sister of Frederick William III.; Prince Albert of Prussia had married the Princess Marianne of the Netherlands; and Prince Frederick, younger son of William I., was son-in-law of the King of Prussia. Princes Albert and

Frederick, who happened to be at the time at Berlin, exercised, moreover, irresistible influence over the minister, Ancillon, who was looked upon as the tool of the absolutists.

On the 3rd of February, M. Bresson, minister of France at the Court of Prussia, warned General Goblet of the question of form which M. Ancillon was going to raise as to his appointment. "Do not be uneasy," he added, "and pursue "your own course. There has been an attempt, "probably from the side of Holland, to do you a "harm, by getting it supposed that you took "French leave of the King of the Netherlands' "service."

M. Ancillon, being next day put by Captain Beaulieu under the necessity of explaining, confessed indeed that the two Dutch princesses had brought to his knowledge facts which he thought made it obligatory on him to demand explanations from Baron Arnim before replying to the notification of General Goblet's appointment.[7]

On the 6th M. Beaulieu delivered to M. Ancillon a note demanding a written declaration.

[7] Captain Beaulieu to King Leopold, Berlin, February 5, 1834.

The Prussian minister next day gave him to understand that the King, his master, and the members of his cabinet, professed great esteem for the character and talents of General Goblet; but that, if he did not mean to demand that the Belgian diplomatic agent, whoever he might be, should be furnished with other testimony than that of his sovereign, he nevertheless sustained the "question of form" which he had previously raised.

General Goblet, who was already on the way to Berlin, received at Gotha a despatch in which King Leopold communicated to him, under the date of March 18th, a confidential letter from Frederick William III. It was a remarkable document, in that its style was midway between the official and private letter. The King of Prussia, after a high eulogium on General Goblet, proceeded thus: "There is "spread abroad, however, at Berlin, a piece of "news which came from the Hague, that the "general left the service of the King of the "Netherlands without having demanded or "obtained a definitive discharge, and that he is "down by name in the list of deserters. This

" piece of news has been verified, and has created " an injurious impression against the general in " public opinion, which, in social circles, would " expose him to all sorts of disagreeables, at " which I should be much pained, but which I " should not be able to prevent, and which " might have serious consequences injurious to " your majesty's service. I should be very glad, " then, if it should be possible for General " Goblet to deny the facts before I see him " accredited to me. . . . ." General Goblet hastened to send to King Leopold an accurate account of the relations that had existed between the Prince of Orange and himself at the time when he left Antwerp, but he formally refused to exculpate himself in the eyes of a foreign cabinet. " I should consider," he said, " that I was wanting " to the government of your majesty and to " myself if I let the cabinet of Berlin suppose " that I would ever make the slightest movement " to obtain, so to speak, the permission of the " King of Holland to represent your majesty at " the Court of Prussia or of any other power."[8]

[8] General Goblet to King Leopold, Gotha, March 21, 1834.

King Leopold had the complete history of this diplomatic episode communicated to Lord Palmerston; and, convinced that the information which would be transmitted by Baron Arnim to Berlin would smooth away all difficulties, he gave General Goblet encouragement, and drew for his guidance a very interesting picture of the Court of Prussia. Whilst by no means disguising from himself the fact that the royal family were anti-Belgian, he could count amongst them, he believed, true friends dating from the wars of 1813 and 1814, and from his long residence in Silesia and at Berlin in 1828. He had always been particularly attached to the king, setting aside political considerations; he had never ceased to be very intimate with the hereditary prince, and to have a profound esteem for his brother, Prince William. Although Prince Charles, the king's brother, was *ultra*, Leopold preserved a kindly recollection of him; the other brother, Prince William, and the princess, his wife, he regarded as friends for whom he felt the most sincere affection.[9]

[9] King Leopold to General Goblet, Brussels, March 31, 1834.

Unhappily King Leopold, in the deep affliction caused him by the illness which had ended by carrying off the prince royal, did not at once reply to the letter addressed to him by King Frederick William. This delay galled the king, and added fresh difficulties to those which had already accumulated in the path of General Goblet. He, in spite of the powerful hostility he was sure to encounter at Berlin, believed, nevertheless, that the dignity of the Belgian government ought to determine him to repair as soon as possible to the capital of Prussia, and King Leopold shared his opinion. The general, then, arrived at Berlin on the 6th of April, and the next day but one delivered to privy-councillor De Küster, in place of M. Ancillon, who had gone to Vienna, a copy of a letter whereby the King of the Belgians accredited him to the King of Prussia in the capacity of envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary. Some days afterwards he learned that the Court of Prussia had resolved to take an extraordinary step with respect to the Belgian government, and to declare that the official reception of General Goblet would not take place until his

position with respect to the King of Holland should have been set right. The King of Prussia, moreover, announced his intention of personally taking towards the Court of the Hague the steps necessary for the purpose. But the general would not allow that his admission to the Court of Berlin should depend on the good pleasure of the King of the Netherlands: he protested afresh against this attack on the dignity of the King of the Belgians, and sent Captain Beaulieu to Brussels to ask for instructions.[10] The Cabinet of Brussels decided that orders of recall should be immediately sent over.[11] This decision received the assent of King Leopold, who at the same time sent the King of Prussia a letter, which, had it been written sooner, might have prevented very untoward incidents.

General Goblet left Berlin on the 6th of May, and after having remained some time at Dresden, returned to Brussels, breaking up his political career rather than consent to a

[10] General Goblet to Count Felix de Mérode, Interim Minister of Foreign Affairs, Berlin, April 15, 1834.

[11] The Minister of Foreign Affairs to General Goblet, Brussels, April 24, 1834.

humiliating step. King Louis Philip and his Minister of Foreign Affairs, upon being consulted about the notes exchanged on this occasion, expressed themselves with extreme reserve. They were against a prolongation of correspondence, because the ordinary effect of such a discussion was, they said, to introduce displeasure and irritation into the relations of the two parties, even when it did not lead to a rupture.[12]

[12] Louis Philip wrote to King Leopold (April 27, 1834): "The Goblet affair is a terrible mishap. . . . Even supposing King William to allow the *radiatur*, it would not "suit you to have your minister received at Berlin *by his* "*permission*. . . . I had begged M. Le Hon to remind you "or to tell you, for you must have been ignorant of it, that "in 1830, when I had appointed Admiral Verhuel my minister "at Berlin, the King of Prussia had me informed (without "even writing to me) that the appointment embarrassed "him, because the admiral was Dutch, and had been in the "service of Holland; that he feared it might cause the "admiral trouble; and so we did not confirm the admiral's "appointment, and had the place otherwise filled. I regret "immensely that you did not follow the same plan, and, "above all, that you did not answer the King of Prussia's "letter, at which they tell me he was very angry. It appears "that this anger has been well worked by the princes and "princesses and a party in the court whose feelings towards "us, far from ameliorating, become every day more sour "and more evil. You know, also, that events at Brussels

In consequence of this diplomatic episode, Belgium up to 1840 had at Berlin only a chargé d'affaires.

The reigning Duke of Saxe-Coburg formed a correct judgment of the proceedings of which General Goblet had to complain when he wrote to the latter: "I see in the matter the result of "an intrigue against you on the part of the "adversaries of the cause you were called upon to "represent."[13]

King Leopold, on his side, acknowledged that compensation was due to the man who, two years ago, had rendered such great service to Belgium: he therefore had the offer made him of the portfolio of war, but without a seat in the council, and, consequently, without obligation to retire at every dissolution of ministry. General Goblet, however, declined the king's offer, opining that in the present state of things that ministry would not be proper for him.

"have not been passed over, and have been commented on "so as to make capital of them. . . ." *Retrospective Review*, p. 329.

[13] Ernest, Duke of Saxony, to General Goblet, May 12, 1834.

May 1st, Leopold had sanctioned the law which was to create the first railroads of the continent of Europe, to join the Scheldt to the Rhine, and to bring the North Sea close to the southern frontier of the country. The King had formed a very decided opinion personally on this subject: he had studied with care the plans prepared by the engineers Simons and De Ridder, and had taken the opinion of George Stephenson, the illustrious originator of the English railways. In agreement with the minister of the interior, who had proposed the plans and been charged with their defence, he was of opinion that the execution of them ought to be the work of the state, in order that the law submitted to the legislature might preserve a character of nationality within and without. He had followed with the most lively interest the discussions of the Chambers, and cheered those manly and patriotic words of the minister when he said: "All praise to the "nation which within three years of its creation, "after passing through evil days, could show "itself the equal of the strongest and most "ancient; which, fettered, and, alas! mutilated in "two of its members, could fall back upon its

" own resources, and draw from its own powers " the germs of life and glory . . . ."[15]

The nation to whose service Leopold was devoted was beginning to properly appreciate the uprightness and elevation of its sovereign's character. He himself said he was steadily gaining ground. A notable proof of this was seen in the almost triumphal tour he made towards the end of the summer with the queen to Ghent and the other towns of Flanders.

But the partisans of the House of Orange had not lost all hope of seeing a reconstruction of the former kingdom of the Netherlands. When the Duke of Wellington took office, November 16th, the Orangemen hailed his accession as the restoration of King William. Leopold, however, had confidence in the sound sense of the Duke of

[14] *See* the speech of M. C. Rogier, minister of the interior, at the session of the Chamber of Representatives of March 17, 1834 (*Belgian Monitor* of the 18th).

M. De Mérode, although a minister of state and member of the council, went from bench to bench in the Chamber, repeating that what ministers said was absurd, and, when his conduct caused observation, he replied that the ministers were not four parrots, obliged to say each the same thing always. The king wrote to him to point out the inconvenience that would arise if he *voted* differently from his colleagues.

Wellington, and in the wisdom and ability of the Tories' other chief, Sir Robert Peel. And he was not deceived: the Duke of Wellington was not long without giving the Belgian government proof of sympathy, which dissipated all fears. The hero of Waterloo was convinced that no European power would readily compromise itself with the sole design of reconstructing the kingdom of the Netherlands as it existed before 1830. Besides, Leopold was at great pains to disabuse the Duke's mind of the idea he appeared to entertain, that Belgium was determined to abide indefinitely *in statu quo*, although the king really appreciated all the advantages of the position. "Belgium is bound," he wrote on the 13th of March, 1835, "to negotiate if *reasonable offers* "be made, and it is to her interest to give this "impression to the foreign powers."

On the 9th of April, 1835, was born at Brussels the prince who, after bearing from 1840 the title of Duke de Brabant, now reigns as Leopold II. It could be truly said that from the capital to the smallest hamlet cries of joy greeted an occurrence which tended to consolidate the Belgian dynasty.

The king was in ecstasies. "The birth of this "child," he wrote on the 13th of May, "is a "great consolation to us." And some months afterwards (December 12th): "The queen is "staying here (at Laeken), and our child, God "be praised, is going on well; we can only pray "that Heaven may continue as gracious to us as it "is now."[15] At the same time Leopold stated that the people were happy, that there was work, and that articles of prime necessity were not dear. He added that rarely had a nation after a revolution been in better condition.

Leopold was laying the foundations also of the greatness which was to be attained by the House of Saxe-Coburg. On the 9th of April, 1836, Donna Maria II., Queen of Portugal, married Prince Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg-Kohary, nephew of the King of the Belgians. Two years had passed since the convention signed at Evora had ended in a civil war which had swallowed up, it was said, more than 17,000 men. A corps organised in Belgium had fought against the

[15] Prince Philip, Count de Flandre, was born at the palace of Laeken, March 24, 1837, and the Princess Charlotte at the same place, June 7, 1840.

Miguelists, and the Duke of Braganza had nobly acknowledged in the Cortes the unequivocal proofs of good-will and helpful friendship he had received from the new kingdom.[16] But the civil war was followed by the violent struggle between the *Constitutionalists* and the *Chartists*, a struggle which shook the very throne, and gave warning of fresh calamities to come. Leopold sent to Lisbon M. Van de Weyer, his minister in London, to sustain and guide the young couple, who were at times affrighted at the storm. At the beginning of the autumn, General Goblet, for his part, repaired twice to England, to interest Viscount Melbourne and Lord Palmerston, who had returned to office since April 18, 1835, in the perilous fate of the Queen Donna Maria. Leopold would have had England act against the *Constitutionalists*, that is, the ultra-liberals; and the queen take refuge in the palace of Belem, and put herself under the protection of the English fleet; if need were, he had no objection to allowing the recruitment in Belgium of a foreign legion, to be landed by British ships. The prompt

[16] Don Pedro died this same year (September 24, 1836).

intervention of England in favour of the *Chartists* was, he thought, the only means of preventing the triumph of Don Miguel, and consequently the ruin of Donna Maria and of the liberals themselves.[17] This crisis, of which the various phases need not be here recalled, was prolonged for a considerable time.

In 1832, the reigning Duke of Saxe-Coburg's two sons, Ernest and Albert, had accompanied their father to Brussels on a visit to their uncle Leopold. Four years afterwards they returned thither to complete their education under the eye of the King of the Belgians. They remained ten months, and then went to the University of Bonn, carrying with them a lasting remembrance of the country which used with moderation and good sense the exercise of the widest liberties. This was the date at which a match was talked of between Prince Albert, who had been as a child his uncle Leopold's favourite, and Princess Victoria, destined to fill so exalted a station.[18]

[17] King Leopold to General Goblet, Laeken, October 29, 1836.

[18] See "Early Years, etc.," *passim*.

On the 20th of June, 1837, Princess Victoria became, by the death of William IV., Queen of Great Britain and Ireland. The Duke of Wellington, in a conversation with the statesman who was going to replace M. Van de Weyer at Lisbon, told the story of the young queen's accession. Let General Goblet himself speak:[19] "After the usual compliments," he wrote, "and the flattering expressions your Majesty "had charged me with, his Grace suddenly "opened the subject by saying, 'Well, we have "'had a great event here, a complete change of "'dynasty, for the queen's accession is nothing "'less. However, there is no other change, and "'with the exception of certain alterations in "'court functions, the passage from one reign to "'another may be said to have been imper-"'ceptible, only it is indisputable that the "'queen's position is the finest that any monarch "'could have. Whichever way the balance may "'incline in the next elections, it must be a "'matter of indifference to her Majesty. I dare, "'however, to say that if, as I think will be the

[19] General Goblet to the King of the Belgians, London, July 8, 1837.

" ' case, the conservative party gain ground, the
" ' position will only be improved. But,' added
" the Duke, ' if the position be good, the queen
" ' appears quite worthy of it.' And here, as a
" peg on which to hang his praises, he told me
" of the only instance in which he had as yet
" been permitted to see her Majesty. It was
" when the numerous members of the Privy
" Council had been summoned to the ceremony
" of taking the oath. He described to me the
" solemn audience in all its details, and in the
" manner of one who had never ceased to keep
" his eyes upon your Majesty's august niece.
" He was at once struck with the resources to be
" drawn from dignity, ease, look, and gait, to
" make up for slightness of bodily form. He
" strove to explain the localities to me, that I
" might more completely understand his admira-
" tion; he told me about an immense arm-chair,
" capable of holding half-a-dozen queens of her
" Majesty's size, and yet she alone seemed to fill it
" by virtue of her mingled dignity and grace.
" The sound of the queen's voice, and the
" expression she put into her delivery of certain
" passages, appear to have made a great impres-

"sion upon the duke. He observed in her "Majesty no signs of emotion, save for a single "moment, and that was when her two uncles "knelt to kiss her hand,[20] and then a slight blush "rose on her Majesty's cheeks. When the turn "arrived of the archbishops, who on former occa- "sions of a different kind had been the *examiners* "of Princess Victoria, the queen received them as "if she had no knowledge of them. Her impas- "sive face then made again a great impression "upon the duke, who explained his feelings to me "by saying that the queen seemed to have "reigned not merely six short hours, but rather "six whole years. I think, sir, these details are "enough to give your Majesty an idea of the "spirit which pervaded the interview. I can, "moreover, sum it all up briefly by saying that "not a word of regret for the late king slipped "out, but it revealed great devotion towards "Queen Victoria."

Leopold, ever discreet, had made a point of giving Prince Albert, who was at Bonn, an exact account of affairs in England, where all parties

[20] The two uncles were the Duke of Cumberland, afterwards King of Hanover, and the Duke of Sussex.

united, it is true, in paying homage to the young queen, but seemed to be more than ever engaged in manœuvring and intriguing one against another. Leopold advised his nephews to travel in the south of Germany and in Switzerland. His object was to distract public attention for some time from the young princes in respect of the proposed marriage, rumours of which had already been noised abroad during their visit to Brussels.

At the same time Leopold continued to extend his care to another of his young relations, Prince Ferdinand, who shared with Donna Maria the throne of Portugal. General Goblet was then starting for Lisbon, in the capacity of minister plenipotentiary, or, more correctly speaking, family-minister. He was the adviser of the king and queen during the tragic incidents of 1837 and 1838.

On the 28th of June in the latter year (1838), took place the coronation of Queen Victoria, an imposing ceremony, at which the King of the Belgians was represented by Prince de Ligne, head of one of the most illustrious houses of the old Netherlands, grandson of that

celebrated field-marshal who had been one of the most famous contemporaries of the Emperor Joseph II., Queen Mary Antonietta, and Catharine the Great of Russia.

But already the King of Holland had brought about a new crisis, which was to once more put in peril the peace of Europe.

After having for seven years resisted the solicitations of his people, and the protocols of the conference of London, William I. had just given in his adhesion to the treaty of November 15, 1831. This resolution was stated in a note of March 14, 1838, delivered to the Conference by the Dutch plenipotentiary. Leopold, thus brought once more face to face with the treaty of 1831, and threatened with having to see torn from him the populations of Limburg and Luxemburg, which were and desired to remain Belgian, wished, in common with his people, to in his turn try the effect of resisting Europe. The courts of the north had formally declared that the treaty of November 15, 1831, could not receive the least modification as regarded the territorial constitution of Belgium; the English ministry had taken a similar resolution, and the French cabinet

would defend only the Belgium of the twenty-four articles. Even now there was talk of preparing a counterpart to the siege of Antwerp, by tearing, through German instrumentality, Venloo from the Belgians.

The national representation was not slow to reveal in an energetic manner the wishes of the country: on the 30th of April, the Chamber voted unanimously an address, in which it expressed the hope—the certainty even, that the integrity of Belgian territory would be maintained. Seventeen days afterwards the senate, also unanimously, demanded the preservation of this integrity. Leopold, defying the menaces that the vigorous address of the Chamber of Representatives had already called forth from beyond the Rhine, answered that his sentiments and his wishes were in accord with those of his people.

These were no idle words. Leopold felt a disposition to defend, sword in hand, the rights and pretensions of Belgium. He ardently desired to take vengeance for the check experienced in 1831; he believed that a war would consolidate Belgian nationality, and that a baptism of fire

was necessary for it. He therefore hurried on the armaments, called out the militia, and had at the end an army of 116,000 men, who asked nothing but to fight for their country.[21]

Leopold loudly declared his fixed design, when on the 13th of November, at the opening of the Chambers, he pronounced those memorable words which he had himself dictated: "Our differences "with Holland are not yet settled: the rights "and interests of the country are the sole rules "of my policy; they have been treated with the "care their importance requires, and they shall "be defended with persistency and courage!" These words electrified the assembly: they rose spontaneously, and made the hall of legislature re-echo with prolonged cheers. And when the sovereign issued from the Palace of the Nation, the enthusiastic acclamations of the army and of the people ratified the approbation bestowed by the members of the legislature on the royal speech. The warlike declaration of Leopold likewise made a profound sensation in Holland

[21] It is made out that the Dutch had actually under arms but 60,000 or 70,000 men. See *Conference of London*, by Sirtema de Grovestins (Paris, 1844), p. 96.

and in the courts of the north: it was supposed (wrongly, however) that, as the King of the Belgians was just from the Tuileries, he had received an assurance of support from the French government.

Not only had Leopold tried to conciliate the support of his father-in-law, but he had, besides, endeavoured to detach the English cabinet from the northern courts, well knowing that the co-operation of Louis Philip would depend on a previous understanding with England. He had also laboured ably to gain Lord Palmerston, and to make him favourably disposed towards the system of resistance he had adopted.[22] Lord Palmerston had not renounced his predilection for the Belgians, but his colleagues, fearing to compromise the fate of the cabinet, bound him to submit to the decisions of the Conference. On the other hand, Count Molé, at the head of the French Cabinet, had plainly declared that he saw with real pain King Leopold personally engaging in the territorial difficulty. He even added: "We cannot follow the king on that

[22] Count Molé to Louis Philip, August 2 and September 5, 1838. *Retrospective Review*, pp. 102 and 104.

"ground." This was quite Louis Philip's way of thinking. He deplored the addresses of the Belgian Chambers, he found fault with the armaments of the cabinet of Brussels, and added that it ought to confine itself to the reduction of the debt. Lastly, he adjured his son-in-law not to bring political storm or war upon France.[23] Glad to see himself this time supported by Lord Palmerston, he entreated King Leopold to follow the wise counsels of that statesman, that is, to adhere to the treaty instead of favouring those who wished for war, revolution, and a general upheaval.[24] To disperse the last illusion of the King of the Belgians, he announced to him his well-weighed intention of joining the other powers, and signing the protocol lying open in London.[25] This final protocol had been adopted, December 6. It fixed at an annual payment of 5,000,000 florins (£427,083, 6*s.* 8*d.*), instead of 8,400,000 florins (£717,500), the share of the Belgians in the debt of the United Kingdom of

[23] Louis Philip to King Leopold, December 8, 1838. *Retrospective Review*, p. 331.

[24] Same to same, December 11, 1838.

[25] Same to same, December 18, 1838.

the Netherlands, with quittance of arrears up to January 1st, 1839; but, on the other hand, it reproduced and maintained the territorial arrangements of the treaty of November 15, 1831.

The Cabinet of Brussels still made an attempt to obtain by a compromise the disputed territory. On the 15th of January, 1839, M. Van de Weyer delivered to the Conference of London a note whereby the Belgian government proposed to redeem the districts which were to be taken from her, by means of a sum of 60,000,000 florins (£5,125,000), payable at once, independently of the five millions a year. The Queen of the Belgians, who was at the time at Paris, communicated the contents of the note to her father; but Louis Philip, instead of supporting it, said it was certain the Conference would not consent in any case to the redemption of the whole of the territories. On the night of January 20-21, M. Molé sent General Sébastiani, French ambassador in London,[26] the order to sign the treaty already sanctioned by the four other courts.

Some days after the crisis arrived at its

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[26] Prince Talleyrand had died, May 17, 1838.

paroxysm. The Cabinet of Brussels, in which divergent opinions had been manifested, was in process of dissolution, whilst the representatives of Austria and Prussia, using for pretext the admission of General Skrzynecki into the Belgian army, broke off diplomatic connection, and with the persons attached to their legations left the capital. "It is not I who can be accused," wrote Louis Philip at that time to King Leopold, "of "having drawn you into this scrape to obtain "possession of your spoils."

"We are on our own account," he said again, "quite decided not to separate from the Con- "ference, for the peace of the world depends on "this union; but you may be perfectly certain "that whilst maintaining this agreement we shall "do all that will lie in our power to make the "conditions of peace for Belgium as favourable "as equity can allow."[27]

Leopold, notwithstanding his isolation, would not even yet have submitted had he seen in the future a glimpse of hope of any other conduct on the part of France. But the chiefs of the

[27] Louis Philip to King Leopold, January 9 and February 7, 1839.

coalition, who were about to overthrow the ministry presided over by M. Molé, did not show any disposition to adopt a more decided, a more warlike policy in favour of the Belgians. The declarations of M. Thiers and of M. Guizot were on this point identical. The cabinet of Brussels, at the time reduced to three members, believed at last that they ought to rally to the counsels of Louis Philip and Lord Palmerston. King Leopold also gave in, but not without difficulty. On the 19th of February M. Theux, Minister of Foreign Affairs, proposed to the legislature acceptance of the last decisions of the Conference of London. After violent discussions, the Chamber of Representatives gave its adhesion, on the 19th of March, and some days afterwards the Senate followed this example.

On the 19th of April, before putting his signature to the treaty which had caused so much excitement in Europe and sorrow in Belgium, King Leopold's representative in London addressed the Conference in the following terms: ". . . . His Majesty owed a last " effort to the populations which have shown so " much devotion and affection; and if he con-

" sents to abandon them it is less because of " the dangers which threatened the whole of " Belgium than in consideration of the evils which " must burst upon Limburg and Luxemburg. " Never did his Majesty more painfully feel all " the extent of the task he has undertaken in the " interests of general peace, and for the sake of " establishing a nationality which had become a " necessity of European policy: he will feel some " consolation in the idea that this nationality " and this peace are henceforth beyond the reach " of any attack. . . ."

Subjoined is the correspondence which forms the basis of the chapter.

CORRESPONDENCE.

* *King Leopold to M. Le Hon.*

"Laeken, July 13, 1833.

"You have herewith a letter for my brother-in-law,[1] "which I beg you to get transmitted to him by safe means. "I think if he will write, and intrust the letter to you, and "you have it passed on by diligence, it will arrive without "being read. The post is not so sure. With reference to "the impression my observations have made on the king, I "beg you will try to make him see that even a great country, "of which the principal rivers were blockaded, and which "was cut off, by having bad frontiers given it, from its com- "mercial resources, and on which, further, there was imposed "a foreign debt, at the same time that it was deprived of all "its [outlying?] domains, would be very badly off. Let the "Thames be treated as the Scheldt has been, and we shall "see.

"In the Conference all has been done that could be to "render its existence difficult; on the other hand, we have "this old tradition of the wealth of the Netherlands: we

[1] The Duke d'Orléans.

" are believed to have been again marvellously well treated " in being saddled with no larger share of the Dutch debt.

" General Goblet will start to-morrow evening; his " good sense and intimate knowledge of affairs will be " useful.

" The queen is still well, and I do not think she will be " confined much before the 19th.

" I have only time to say farewell.

" LPLD."

* *Same to Same.*

" Laeken, Oct. 5, 1833.

" I read with great interest your letter of which C. Vilain " XIV. was the bearer. I don't know how to express to " you my satisfaction at the zeal you display with reference " to the material interests of Belgium. The scheme of " France is absurd: how could she, with the existing prices " of iron and coals in France, do all that ironwork, etc., " except at the expense of *all* the other manufactures? As " for us, we have no choice. If France do not modify her " tariff, Holland rejecting our produce, we *must, without loss* " *of time*, have recourse to the Prussian scheme, which, from " the point of view of extensive trade, would be of great " utility, greater even than our connection with France. " Our cloths, cottons, skins, hats, etc., would do immensely " well there; and France would be, nevertheless, forced to " get coals of us. All this is by no means menace, but very " seriously occupies attention in this country, where there " would be a pretty strong bias in favour of Germany.

" My plan is to start on the 17th, and arrive on the " 18th at Paris; we should pass the night at Bonavir. All " this is still subject to changes which might be brought " about by the conduct of Holland. I believe all idea of

"an arrangement with that country has vanished: it is "regrettable; the provisional is very harmful for us, and it "will perhaps be necessary to take one's part openly—give "up all notion of an arrangement, and take one's measures "accordingly.

"I rejoice by anticipation in the pleasure of chatting "with you, and I am, ever with the same sentiments,

"LPLD."

* *King Leopold to Louis Philip, King of the French.*

"Brussels, Dec. 14, 1833.

"MY VERY DEAR BROTHER AND EXCELLENT FRIEND,

"Van de Weyer has just arrived, and as he has rendered "me an account of the position of things in England, I "think it will be useful to make you acquainted therewith.

"It appears that the ministry is firmly established, and "that there will be no change, unless the death of Lord "Grey or some event of that nature derange the order of "things. The king would be inclined towards a modifica- "tion which would bring about a coalition between Lord "Brougham and Peel, keeping Stanley and others in this "way. The thing is, however, utterly impossible for Peel "*under existing circumstances.* The Duke of Wellington is "master of the House of Lords, and the Tories are of the "most unreasonable sort, which is the more to be regretted "as that forces the ministry to weaken them in the corpora- "tions, etc., beyond what is desirable. This hatred, then, "is the reason that the Tories put everything at stake, and "this winter is once more particularly devoted to intrigues. "The most active appear to take place with Russia. The "Duke of Cumberland has been very specially charged "with that. Matuszewic is believed to be entirely accredited "to the Tories. It is said that their advice to the Emperor

" Nicholas is *to bully France and the present English ad-*
" *ministration; that Lord Grey will never be able to go to*
" *war; and that strong* [measures?] *on the part of Russia*
" *will be the best means of upsetting his administration.* There
" is truth in that. If the English ministers behave feebly
" towards Russia, their position will become pretty critical,
" and that of France likewise. It appears, however, that
" their intention is to hold firm; if they show their teeth, I
" think Russia will be the more scared of the two, for in a
" war with England she has all to lose and nothing to gain.
" It must be seen to what extent Prussia and Austria will
" allow themselves to be infected by Russian policy; you
" will do well to employ all possible means to discover; it
" is more difficult for me to discover, as we are too much
" under the ban of the empire. Baron Arnim has neverthe-
" less spoken to me in the sense in which I write to you;
" he finds fault with England, and thinks that the Emperor
" Nicholas has no serious designs on Turkey, and that it
" would be for England to watch over that.

" We, for our Belgian affairs, are already feeling the
" counter-blow. Palmerston, having had an intention of pro-
" posing some measures relative to the arrears, the ministers
" of Prussia and Austria gave him to understand that they
" had received instructions of a fresh date, specially pre-
" cluding them from acceding to anything whatever which
" might be unfavourable to King William, and that they
" advised him to put off his movement.

" I think that herein it will be necessary for France to
" show a great deal of dignity and courage, but also of
" discretion. In Germany a war would be extremely
" *unpopular, that, at least, I know positively;* and without
" Germany the Emperor Nicholas can do nothing.

" Here the Chamber has been at its usual fooleries;

" there are personalities, enmities against Lebeau and " Goblet, and then, on the part of Gendebien and Co., the " desire for a republic, for general confusion by which they " hope to profit. That is sufficiently tiresome, and forces " me to be busy with reconstructing the ministry or forming " a new one, into which would enter a little Catholic leaven, " which has the majority in the Chamber.

" The cotton manufacture suffers, but I believe the " suffering is exaggerated, and that there is a desire to profit " by the occasion to wrest from the Chamber something re- " sembling the old million for manufacture.

" The fact, however, is that we lack outlets, and that we " suffer from the fraud which goes on on all sides. The " state of the finances is satisfactory, and, if we have peace, " we shall even be able to diminish our army towards the " spring. Heaven aid your Chamber to behave wisely! I " have forgotten to tell you that Van de Weyer has also " given me an account of the number of publications in " England which preach republicanism and partition of " wealth. It is time for me to finish my long letter.

" For life,

" My dearly beloved father,

" Your faithfully devoted son-in-law and friend,

" LEOPOLD."

N.B. This unpublished letter was found in the Tuileries in 1848.

Note.

At the end of September, 1830, Captain Goblet happened to be in garrison at the Fortress of Menin, in which he commanded the engineers. Notwithstanding the dispersion of the troops of the garrison after the fruitless attack on Brussels, he remained at the post which had been intrusted

to him, and waited in vain for orders from the Government of the Netherlands until October 10. It was only on that day that he received, on one hand, from the provisional government established at Brussels, orders to repair to that place; and, on the other, an invitation from the Prince of Orange to go to him at Antwerp. He arrived at Antwerp on the 11th, in the morning. He could not see the prince immediately, and he had time to learn that the order for him to leave Belgium and repair to Flessingue had been issued, and that Prince Frederick had been greatly irritated at his delay in executing it. But this order had been intercepted and forwarded to the provisional government.

Towards noon the Prince of Orange received him at the palace, in the room where were the bas-reliefs devoted to the history of the House of Nassau. The heir to the kingdom of the Netherlands had always displayed a great liking for Captain Goblet, and the latter had even accompanied him during a long visit to Russia. But the prince did not express very clearly the object with which he had now sent for him. After a rather melancholy conversation about the sad state into which affairs had been brought, Captain Goblet signified to the prince, that having come to Antwerp at his invitation, it would be very disagreeable to him to be separated from his person, which was said to be Prince Frederick's intention. The Prince of Orange told him to make himself quite easy, but in a manner little calculated to give complete assurance of the power he enjoyed. It was under such circumstances that Captain Goblet showed the order of the provisional government charging him to repair to Brussels. He then left the prince, without having any very decided ideas as to the impression his observations had produced. As it was important, nevertheless, to know his ultimate wishes, he went to M. Le Hon, member of the

States-General, and of the council which the prince had formed at Antwerp. To him he communicated his position, and, as M. Le Hon had to repair to the prince, he begged him to remind the prince of their conversation. M. Le Hon came and announced that the prince had sent him on a mission to the provisional government, and had handed him a passport which permitted him to conduct Captain Goblet to Brussels. They repaired thither in the night between the 11th and 12th. M. Le Hon then returned to the Prince of Orange, and told him that the provisional government had appointed Captain Goblet colonel and inspector-general of engineers.

When William II. had ascended the throne, after his father's abdication, he of his own proper motion set right General Goblet's position towards the preceding government, by discharging him honourably from the service of the Netherlands from the date of their last interview. About the same time the Prussian government sent the general the grand riband of the Red Eagle.

* *King Leopold to General Goblet.*

"Brussels, March 31, 1834.

". . . . As for the King (Frederick William III.), you "will express to him all my affection, which will cease only "with my life; I have always been especially fond of him, "setting aside all political considerations. The remembrance "of my long visit to him in Silesia and Berlin in 1828 is one "of the most agreeable reminiscences of my life. The "Prince and Princess Royal have likewise been long known "to me, and I have always been very intimate with the "Prince Royal.[2] As for the Princess, I have from her infancy

[2] The hereditary prince succeeded his father, June 7, 1840, as Frederick William IV.

"seen her often and often, being very friendly with her "parents.[3] As for Prince William, the King's son,[4] I have "always esteemed him particularly, and I very much depend "upon his good-will. The Princess, who is my relative, has "always greatly interested me.[5] Prince Charles is an *ultra*, "but still you may tell him how mindful I am of all his kind- "nesses in 1828, and I should much like to meet him. The "Princess, an old acquaintance and relative, is a good "creature. The Alberts are naturally hostile: with Albert "himself, however, I stood very well in 1828. Prince William, "the King's brother, and the Princess, are true friends, for "whom I feel the most sincere and devoted affection.[6] A "great deal of attention also will have to be shown to the "Duchess of Cumberland.

"I believe this is all I have to say to you, adding, how- "ever, many kind regards to good Count Lottum, who was "very friendly with me during our campaigns of 1813 and "1814.

"I recommend you to obtain all the enlightenment M. de "Carlowitz can give you. According to what I hear, the "Royal Family is very anti-Belgian. I forgot to tell you to "remember me to that good Princess von Liegnitz, whom "I very much affect.

"LEOPOLD."

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[3] Princess Elizabeth Louise, daughter of the late Maximilian Joseph, King of Bavaria.

[4] Now H.M. William I., King of Prussia.

[5] Princess Augusta of Saxe-Weimar.

[6] Prince William of Prussia, brother of Frederick William III., died in 1851.

* *Same to Same.*

"Laeken, April 24, 1834.

"MY DEAR GENERAL,

"I deplore all that has taken place at Berlin; but after "all there is nothing to be said about the past. Your recall "is an inevitable consequence. I join herewith a letter to "the King of Prussia, which you will take care reaches him at "once: as it is not official, it does not concern the ministry. "I wished to write to you at greater length, but unfor- "tunately I am in a state of the most restless disquietude "about the health of our child, who is again in great danger.

"Heaven protect you; and always rely upon my senti- "ments being the same.

"LEOPOLD."

* *King Leopold to M. Le Hon.*

"Laeken, December 10, 1834.

"For a very long while I have not been able to write to "you, and nevertheless very important events have taken "place within a short time past.

"The English crisis is not yet over: all will depend upon "the allies Sir Robert will take to himself, or *will be able* to "take to himself. If the moderate party do not join him, the "existence of the ministry will not last beyond the opening "of Parliament.

"I thank Heaven for the vote of the Chamber. I like "the present ministry; it gives me confidence in it, and it "has obtained positive results since it has been in power. "The loss of it at the present moment would, in my opinion, "have been a great misfortune.[7]

[7] The allusion is to the ministry of October 11, 1832, which had just been reconstituted under the ephemeral presidency of Marshal Mortier, and to the vote of confidence it had obtained in the Chamber of Deputies. See *Ten Years' History*, Vol. IV. chap. vii.

" I share your sentiments as to the presence of Belgian " Commissioners at Paris, and when the ministry has re- " covered its nerves, I shall beg you to renew your pressure.

" Here we are going on *very well;* the opposition is " much weakened. . . . . The proposal of the minister of " finance for additional centimes (increased taxation) is in " some sort subject to events, but there is no harm in showing " Europe that Belgium is determined to defend herself, and " that she has the means of doing so. There is nothing on " our part aggressive in the step, but Holland creates all " kinds of phantasmagorias with her militiamen and her train- " bands (*schutery*). All we want is to be in our armaments *on* " *a level* with Holland. The health of the queen is good, " and we can only pray Heaven it may continue so. My " brother-in-law remains with us until Monday. . . . Ever " with the same sentiments towards you,

" LPLD."

* *Same to Same.*

(Extract.)

" Brussels, December 20, 1834.

" I have to-day to beg your active assistance against the " project which Holland appears to have in view of lodging " her funds in France. You see, I am sure, as well as I " do, all there would be to regret in the success of this " attempt of the Dutch. In the first place, I should state " that the Dutch themselves are very uneasy about their " finances, and that there are members of the States-General " who consider the King's course so perilous that they have " sold their stock. The Hollander is in fact and feeling " the van-guard of Holy Alliance, and the most active enemy " of the present order of things in France. It is of import- " ance, therefore, to the French Government to make great

" efforts to prevent French crowns from being destined to " support a war against itself, and Holland from being able " to make France bear the burthen of all the fatal conse- " quences of the King of Holland's policy. I beg you to " make the greatest possible efforts to cause the failure of " this attempt."

* *Same to Same.*

" Brussels, March 13, 1835.

" I take advantage of the departure of a safe courier to " write you a few lines to put you a little straight as to " politics in general. Our relations with England are very " satisfactory and very good. I have taken great pains to " upset the idea which the Duke of Wellington seemed to " have, that Belgium was determined to remain in *statu quo*, " as at present. This idea is a relic still remaining of the " opinions the Duke held as a member of the opposition, for " assuredly if he had time to examine carefully the documents " that are extant, he might convince himself that for four " years past Belgium has never ceased to give not only " assurance but proofs of good intent. The Duke seems to " believe that King William is really disposed to conclude, " that he feels his position must get worse and worse, and " that no European Power will compromise itself with the " sole object of reconstructing the kingdom of the Nether- " lands as it existed before 1830. The Duke develops this " idea with a great deal of wisdom, but it seems to me that " he does not take sufficiently into account King William's " obstinacy and passion, two qualities, however, of which he " has given frequent proofs. The position of Belgium, then, " is at the moment this:

" She is bound to negotiate if reasonable offers be made " to her, and it is to her interest to try generally to convey

" this impression to the foreign powers. However, the " experience of four years of negotiation must be our guide " under actual circumstances. It is on that account that " the Belgian Government must abide finally by the report " which was the last act of the Conference in 1833. This " report declares that it cannot be of any use to discuss the " other points of dispute so long as the Germanic Diet and " the agnates of the House of Nassau shall not have given " their assent to the territorial arrangement.

" In this decision happens to be the only possibility of " arriving at a solution of the Hollando-Belgic business, since " the petty questions which belong rather to the execution " of the treaty would so embroil affairs that it would be in " King William's power to place us in the most embarrassing " position. My intention, then, is fixed not to give up the " only clear and intelligible basis, whatever diplomatic efforts " may be used to make us budge. I have reason to believe, " according to pretty recent news from the Hague, that in " reality the policy of that cabinet would be to try rather to " change the *status quo*, to render it more onerous for " Belgium, without for that purpose making a step towards " the conclusion of the definitive treaty. The ability with " which King William has contrived to work the Diet and " the agnates, who, at will, happened to be disposed or " indisposed to come to an arrangement, just as his policy " demanded, renders the news in my opinion very probable.

" This general sketch of our external politics may serve " you in the conversations you may have with the French " ministers. France will find herself as much if not more " interested therein than we are. The Northern courts " might, by taking advantage of the difficulties at present " inherent in the Hollando-Belgic negotiations, manage to " weaken the relations between France and England.

" It is, therefore, of extreme importance to the French " Government that the course of this business should be clear, " consistent, and just.

" With reference to the construction of a fortress in " Campine, the English Government seemed disposed to see " in it a determination on our part not to negotiate. I hope " we have managed to right ourselves on this point, and we " have even obtained from the Duke an acknowledgment of " the principle that constructions of this nature are internal " matters of which an independent country must be itself the " judge. I thought it useful to give you a few lines on this " subject, since it is probable it will soon be carried to the " Chamber, and I consider it important with respect to the " well-being and independence of the country.

" LPLD."

* *King Leopold to M. Le Hon.*

" Ostend, Sept. 1st, 1836.

" Be good enough to see that the inclosure reaches " M. Thiers: he wrote to me to say that he would not be at " Paris after the 2nd or 3rd of September. If he is gone, " you will send him my letter to his new abode. The " Peninsula is in a very sad state, God knows, for all the " world, and I am not without uneasiness on account of " Portugal.

" Here all is quiet, except the regency of Ghent, under " the guidance of the *Messenger;* they are behaving very " idiotically.

" . . . . I shall conclude by reiterating the sentiments I " always feel towards you.

" LPLD."

* *King Leopold to General Goblet.*

"Laeken, October 29th, 1836.

"On arriving yesterday evening I found your despatch "of the 26th, and you will already have my despatches of "the 27th when this letter reaches you. Just at dinner "time I received a letter from Palmerston, dated the 25th. "It is well enough, and is briefly as follows: 'The queen "'(Donna Maria), to allow of a change of place and ministers, "'must be out of reach of personal danger; she can only "'be so at Belem; we cannot send her any sailors to "'Necessidad.' I share the opinion that the queen should "make a trip to Belem, and remain there, and ask the "admiral (English) for a guard to protect her. As soon as "she has this guard, we have England engaged; for they "will not be able to draw back, and having besides French "vessels beside them, they will be ashamed to allow them-"selves to be mastered by a lot of ill-conditioned rascals, "who, however, will certainly not dare to attack English "troops. This is the idea which must be acted upon, and "so I beg you to write to Van de Weyer.[8]

"I have but a few moments, as I wish to get your man "off to Antwerp this evening: I must therefore be brief. I "read with great interest the despatches from Van de "Weyer: it seems to me that things are getting complicated. "The ultra-liberals in Portugal . . . . ought to see that if "they do not get reconciled to the queen, Don Miguel will "triumph, and that he will have all who remain in the "country taken and shot. There you have the intention of "Don Carlos, which in my opinion will be very successful. "I had the good fortune to find that out, and this fear, if it

[8] M. Van de Weyer, minister-plenipotentiary of Belgium in London, had been intrusted with a special mission to Queen Donna Maria.

"can be impressed on the ultra-liberals, may bring them "back to the two queens, who, God knows, would treat "these gentry very leniently.

"I have in my letter from Paris, and that which I adjoin "to-day for Lord Palmerston, tried to make him understand "the danger to the ministry if Don Miguel is re-established "in Portugal. The Portuguese liberals will give him the "means. What will the English radicals say then? The "matter, as I think, can end no other way.

"Van de Weyer, in giving an account of Saldanha's[9] "plans, traces out the course of things as it appears to me it "must be. Farewell. Stick to Lord Palmerston, and don't "give way; keep trying to learn if he approves the idea of "Saldanha for the Belgian contingent.

"I form wishes for your success, and feel towards you "the sentiments you well know.

"LPLD."

* *General Goblet to the King of the Belgians.*

(Extract.)

"London, July 8th, 1837.

". . . . From talking of England one passes to France. "The eulogism on the king's prudent and courageous con- "duct was on the Duke of Wellington's part only a repeti- "tion of what is heard from everybody's mouth. His "Grace has the highest opinions of the character, mind, and "education of the Duke d'Orléans.

"We come finally to Portugal, and the most practical "information I have derived from all that has been said to "me by a man who had in some sort the organization of

[9] Marshal Saldanha, who had risen by fighting gallantly for Don Pedro and Donna Maria.

" the country, is that at one time the revenue, without any " extortion or excessive burthen, reached three millions " sterling; that at this time England was paying Portugal " by way of subsidy two other millions; and that there was " distributed therein an army of the line of 50,000 men, " besides 50,000 militia armed and equipped, of whom use " was also made, and who were worth more than the regular " army of Spain at that time.

" Such are the facts from the mouth of a very practical " man. But then, he said, there was a government; now " there is none. Men are not made to manage them- " selves; they must be led. Fill, he added, that park in " front of us with a crowd of men, and say to them, get " yourselves out of it, and in a minute they will be tearing " one another to pieces, and before long will be anni- " hilated.

" So far as I could judge the Duke has little hope of the " future of Portugal, and is consequently much troubled.

" Yesterday, Sir, M. Van de Weyer[10] and I were able to " have a joint conversation with Lord Palmerston, whom I " had already seen several times. It was a long one: we " discussed some of the approaching eventualities. The " confidence of your Majesty made that my duty, and I " fulfilled it.

" I will not say I found the minister what he was at the " end of October, 1836; far from advancing, he has retreated " to his position of mid-September in the same year. I can " briefly sum up what he told us by saying that, from his " point of view, the English and Belgian ministers are at " Lisbon to give the prince the best possible advice under " all circumstances that may arise; but that they must

[10] He had returned from Lisbon and resumed his post in London.

" abstain from either commencing or stopping anything that " may concern the internal quarrels of Portugal. They " must countenance all parties, belong to none.

" As to events which might not be exclusively internal, " I asked plainly whether in a case analogous to that which " occurred under Canning, in 1826, Canning's mode of " action would be followed; and I received a categorical " answer in the negative, with an addition to the effect that " inquiry would first be instituted.

" I came to the conclusion, that instead of desiring an " opportunity of intervention, it was dreaded, and that pre- " texts, however legitimate, would not be seized upon; I " even received a declaration to that effect. Use would be " made of the *casus fœderis* (*occasion for alliance*), not where " there was a possibility of doing so, but where it was " impossible to help it.

" This is the last word I heard before the departure of " Lord Palmerston, whom I shall probably not see before " leaving London. The minister, however, expressed the " satisfaction he felt at seeing me on the point of starting " for Lisbon. . . . ."

Louis Philip to the King of the Belgians.

" December 8, 1838.

" I really must tell you that the lamentable addresses " of your Chambers, the support and votes given them by " your ministers, and the armaments with which all this is " accompanied, have brought the crisis to the pitch of " violence I have constantly prophesied to you, and which " as early as last May I charged Van Praet to write to " you about, in the strongest and most impressive terms. " I always thought that there was only the fixing of the " debt in which we could hope to be at all successful,

" because justice was on our side, whilst it was clearly
" against us in the territorial question. What was more, I
" at first thought it of no real interest, and then as im-
" possible to sustain by argument as by force of arms. So
" soon as the King of the Netherlands asked to sign the
" twenty-four articles, I warned you it was from him alone
" that there might perchance be hope of an abandonment of
" some small bit of the territory of Limburg for a pecuniary
" consideration; that I was very doubtful whether it were
" possible, and whether the powers would lend themselves
" to it; and that, in my opinion, it was preferable to cling
" solely to the reduction of the debt, since, in the state both
" of the treaty and of the claim to possession, that which we
" might flatter ourselves the King of Holland would be
" tempted to give up for money, was insignificant and
" illusory, and that the re-opening of the territorial question
" might spoil all and throw everything into confusion,
" without offering us any real advantage whatever, or even
" the chance of success in the case of the little bits—as
" insignificant as useless—to which alone it was possible to
" raise any pretensions. You remember, doubtless, what we
" have so often said in our long conversations about the
" material impossibility of a military defence of the territory
" not comprised within the limits drawn by the twenty-four
" articles; and it must be agreed that, with the exception
" perhaps of the very small portion of Limburg bordering
" on the province of Liège, along the right bank of the
" Meuse, the Conference could hardly have drawn other
" limits between Belgium and Holland than those it has
" assigned, even without taking into consideration the
" changes in respect of Luxemburg prescribed by the
" eighteen articles, and superseded, very advantageously as I
" think for Belgium, by the demarcation definitively ruled

" by the twenty-four articles. Indeed, these territories, " divided by their situation into three distinct lots, separated " and isolated one from another, along the immense extent " of our eastern frontier, from Venloo to Luxemburg, " present by that very fact an absolute impossibility of " defending all, and particularly all at once. And how " much is this consideration strengthened when we see that " each of these portions of territory contains a fortress, of " which the least important of all (Venloo), as well by its " geographical position as by its material strength, is the " only one which would be in your hands; and the two " others (Maestricht and Luxemburg), twenty times more " important, are in the hands of those whom you would " have to fight. It is clear, then, that Venloo is rather an " embarrassment than a help in the way of defence, since " all you could do with it would be to leave in it a garrison " abandoned to its own resources; that as to the territory " in the rear of Maestricht, with that great fort astride the " Meuse, this territory enclosed between the Meuse, Maes- " tricht, and the Prussian frontier of Aix-la-Chapelle, is " absolutely *undefendable*, and that the Belgian army-corps " which should undertake to maintain itself there could not " be successful; and that, finally, the territory absolutely " devoid of forts which remains to the Grand Duchy of " Luxemburg is only just the strategical radius from the " fortress, and that it appears chimerical, especially con- " sidering its distance from the centre of your resources and " forces, to defend it against the attacks especially of a " fortress such as that of Luxemburg. It must be acknow- " ledged, then, that whilst confining herself to the mere " defence of these territories, Belgium would not have even " a battle-field, and could not oppose their occupation. " Further, it is only the guarantee of the moral force of

" France and England which has kept the powers from " effecting this occupation; and here it is expedient to bear " in mind under what views and for what end the Conven- " tion of May 21st, 1833, which created this guarantee, was " concluded. It was concluded as a means of coercion " against Holland, by placing her, through that Convention, " in a more disadvantageous position, so long as she should " refuse to sign the treaty, than that which she would obtain " by signing it; but this Convention never had nor could " have had for end or object to give advantages to Belgium " or remove any from Holland. Lillo and Liefkenshoeck, " occupied by the Dutch, belong to Belgium no less than " Venloo, Ruremonde, Fauquemont, etc., though occupied " by the Belgians, belong to Holland. This is the law " recognized by you, and even accepted by the Belgian " Chambers. Now, let us see the application. We drove " the Dutch from Antwerp with cannon-balls, but we did " not go beyond the limits assigned to Belgium by the " twenty-four articles. The case is all the stronger in that " the King of the Netherlands held the citadel of Antwerp " by virtue of previous treaties, of which he had never con- " sented to the revocation; whilst for Belgium it is precisely " the contrary, since she has no title whatever to oppose to " what might be made valid against her, and has accepted as " regards the five powers the limits assigned to its existence " as an independent State, admitted as such into the great " European family. Further, what can we reply to those " who say to us: 'We only wish to apply to Belgium the " 'same amputation you have used towards Holland, with far " 'less right and title than we have against Belgium?' I " should see no other answer than the Convention of May " 21, 1833, if it were possible to maintain that the accepta- " tion of the twenty-four articles by the King of the Nether-

" lands has not, by right and fact, annulled that Convention ;
" and moreover this position would be so much the more
" untenable, in that even if we had recourse to quibbles,
" which I have no conception of doing, and of which I
" have further no conception what would be the object and
" the good, we know that the two contracting parties,
" England and Holland, will none of it any longer, and that
" consequently it would be absolutely impossible to prolong
" it. We should then have no resource left but a declara-
" tion of war, and never would there have been one more
" absurd or more unjust. Further, my dear brother, you
" know that the moment I had cognisance of the demand
" of the King of the Netherlands to be allowed to sign the
" treaty, I conjured you to confine yourself to the reduction
" of the debt and to the quittance of arrears ; and I told
" you that you might succeed, because it was a private
" question between Holland and Belgium, but that you
" hadn't any chance on the territorial question, which was a
" European question ; and I had flattered myself that you
" were convinced, when the explosion of your Chambers has
" come to spoil all, and to bring on the humiliations which
" inevitably result from an attempt at resistance which has
" neither rights nor means to sustain it. I even believe
" that we are fortunate to have obtained beforehand a
" reduction of the debt and the quittance of arrears ; for
" however just both may have been, it was contrary to the
" letter of the treaty. Under any circumstances, the business
" must be dealt with as it is, and it has arrived at a point as
" troublesome for me as it is serious for you. You will
" know through Count Molé, who is at this moment writing
" to you, and who is sending a despatch to M. Sérurier[11] for

[11] Minister of France at Brussels.

" the information of your government, what is the state of " things in London, and to what we have been brought. " You have always told me that I might trust to you not to " bring down upon us tempest or war. Well, that is just " what I have to ask of you. I see but one way of averting " the tempest, and that is that you should have a declaration " made by your plenipotentiary that you are ready to adopt " the modifications proposed by the Conference, if it consents " to reduce the debt by half the difference still remaining " between 3,800,000 florins (£324,520, about) and 5,000,000 " florins (£427,064, about), that is 600,000 florins (£51,250, " about); so that the fixture should be 4,400,000 florins " (£375,760, about) annually; and, consequently, to re- " nounce all attempt, and in truth all illusion on the " territorial question. Such is the best counsel I can give " you, and it arises from my inward convictions, and, I may " say, from the tender affection I bear you, and from that " which you know I feel for my dearly-beloved daughter " and your precious children, whose future I recommend " you not to ruin by pursuing chimeras. I know not " whether the 600,000 florins (£51,250) can yet be " obtained. I do not despair of it, and God knows we will " do our best to assist you; but if that failed, I should " advise you to go on and sign all the same, for the pro- " longation of your present resistance cannot save those " miserable bits of territory which nobody can defend, and " the invasion of which by force might bring on the annihi- " lation of treaties, and, consequently, leave us no other " means but war of preventing the invasion of Belgium " herself, to which we will offer all the opposition in our " power. But you have told us that you will preserve us " from such extremities, and I count on your wisdom and " your far-seeing and exalted intellect to preserve yourself

" and your family, so dear to my heart, from all the evils " which those extremities would bring in their train."

Same to Same.

" Paris, Tuesday, December 11, 1838.

" MY VERY DEAR BROTHER AND EXCELLENT FRIEND,

" I was at the council yesterday, when I received your " letter of the day before yesterday, with the inclosures, " and that prevented me from sending them at once, but " you will find them herewith. I am infinitely obliged to " you for communicating to me Lord Palmerston's letter. " I must repeat that I see the matter exactly as he does, " and according to my convictions, the counsels he gives " you are the only ones you could reasonably follow. That " opinion which is urging you to a resistance you could not " maintain, will be the first to abandon you, and to add a " charge of humiliation and dastardliness to the result this " attempt could not fail to bring in its train. Those who " applaud for the purpose of dragging you into the torrent " of illusions, by aid of which they flatter themselves they " will light up a war, will use as weapons against you all the " concessions you will have made to these chimeras or their " sinister projects; for what they desire at bottom is war, " revolution, and general upheaval. In my opinion, by " following the counsels Lord Palmerston gives you, not " only would you do nothing contrary to the interests of " Belgium, but I really think that it is only by following the " course he indicates that you can avoid compromising " them gravely. Time presses, my dear brother. You see " us already obliged to ask you to state categorically what " should hinder you from adhering to the treaty you had " previously signed and your Chambers had approved of, " and to inform us precisely of the changes you will desire

" to have made in it. The vagueness you maintain in this " respect cannot be prolonged further; for you quite see " that it would not be allowable for you to say: *I don't* " *want to have anything more to do with the treaty I have* " *signed, but I shall not tell you why I don't.* You must then " explain clearly, and being obliged to explain, I do not think " you could say anything but what Lord Palmerston advises.

" I do not think that either by negotiations or by force " of arms you could prevent occupation of the territories " not comprised in the limits drawn by the twenty-four " articles, and I do not think that the military force, what- " ever it may be, which shall occupy them, would pass the " aforesaid limits. No, it would respect them carefully, " just as we ourselves respected them in the reverse sense, " when we besieged the citadel of Antwerp. It is well " known that France will not in any case permit an invasion " of Belgium, and no one shall meddle with it; but it is " known also that France desires the execution of treaties and " the maintenance of general peace; and I think it vain for " you to flatter yourself you would escape from measures on " the part of the powers to which we should have nothing " to say, and which would consequently be preferred to " attempts at invasion, against which all the weight of " France would be raised in an instant. I think that these " measures would be a rigorous blockade from Luxemburg " to the sea, taking in the Scheldt, which Holland would " hermetically seal, even if, for graceful appearance, she " should have evacuated Lillo and Liefkenshoeck, of which " she has no need to make the blockade effectual. There " would remain then only the port of Ostend, of which the " Dutch fleet would probably undertake the blockade, with- " out even England's having any reason for interfering, for " it would be within the common law of nations. I think I

" might appeal to yourself if I said that this position would " not be tenable for Belgium.

"As for the demand for an extension of territory by " means of a pecuniary sacrifice, that is a purchase, I can " scarcely believe in its success; and I rather believe that if " it succeeded, what you would acquire would not com- " pensate Belgium for what she would have paid to get it. " A project of exchange combined with a pecuniary offer " would probably render success less difficult; but the town " of Werdt, of which you speak, is considerably north of the " line of demarcation which leaves the Meuse *above* Wesem, " and which is directed to the southernmost point of Dutch " Brabant, that is, to the south of Locmel. I have just " verified it on Ferrari's chart, where the ancient possessions " are well indicated. I declare that I do not see what you " will be able to offer in exchange any more than what you " will have to receive in preference to what is done in the " limits fixed by the twenty-four articles. In my opinion it " is only by demanding a more precise demarcation of those " limits that you can have a chance of obtaining some few " villages or the mines of *Calamite;* but I consider that they " are already dearly purchased at the price of the position " this warlike attitude of your Chambers has finished by " placing you in. I think you ought to take a decided " resolution, and that as soon as you can. It is really the " only way of getting out. . . ."

Same to Same.

" Paris, Tuesday, December 18, 1838.

" MY VERY DEAR BROTHER AND EXCELLENT FRIEND,

" You are exceedingly good to fear that the torture " caused me by the Hollando-Belgic business may tell upon " my health. I assure you it is not so, and I am marvel-

" lously well; but, my dear brother, I declare to you that " I am very much disquieted, and, above all, profoundly " grieved to see that my warnings and counsels have not " produced more effect. Already we have been obliged " to have recourse to an official demand, addressed to your " Government, to which we had not to wait for a reply in the " strongest negative; and although it may be painful to me " to give such an opinion, I must warn you that we cannot " be content with such answers. I know that in their " hearts the warlike revolutionaries who are urging you to " war, the better to insure your ruin, say: 'Well, let us force " 'Louis Philip to declare he abandons us. If he dare not, " 'we triumph and have war; but if he dare, then we shall " 'divert on to his head all the odium of this abandonment, " 'and we will speak only of the great things we would have " 'done if France had not failed us.'

" This, I know, my dear brother, is what I have to " expect from them; this is the recompense reserved to me " for having maintained and defended, as I have, your crown " and the independence and all the interests of Belgium, " without letting myself be disgusted by the ingratitude of " the Belgians, or intimidated by their excesses. It is for " you to see if you think it your duty to leave me alone in " this position; but, as for me, my resolution is taken. I " think it my duty to brave them, and to have the protocol " signed; and I therefore warn you afresh that it will be " so. Meanwhile, we will oppose immediate signature; " we still take breathing-space, which, though very short, " leaves you a little time for reflecting definitely on what " you are going to do, and for looking about you and " making the real state of the case fully comprehended.

" As for me, my dear brother, I have never concealed " from you that I regarded the territorial clauses as *binding*

" on me and you and your Chambers, who have adopted " or consented to the treaty of November 15, 1831, by a " law which they voted and you sanctioned. None can " gainsay that the treaty concluded by the five powers " between them, and by them with you, is binding on the " six contracting powers in all that concerns their mutual " relations. Accordingly, it is only as to the fixture of the " debt that I ever thought it possible to hark back, because " it was the only question which could be considered as " relating exclusively to the special relations between " Belgium and Holland, which latter, not having been " pleased to sign the treaty, could not claim its guarantees.

" However, this last reasoning was not even admitted " in its entirety by four of the powers signing the treaty, " and it is only by means of other pretexts that they have " been induced to consent, with great difficulty, to wipe out " the arrears and to reduce the debt, on the condition of " abandonment of the liquidation of the syndicate.

" Do not forget that what follows is the reasoning of the " powers, and even that those of Russia and the German " Diet go still further. Belgium, in its entirety, ceded by " France, was incorporated in the kingdom of the Nether- " lands, created at the Congress of Vienna, by the treaties " of 1814 and 1815, in favour of William of Nassau and his " descendants. In 1830, the five great powers, acknow- " ledging that the maintenance of general peace, &c., " rendered it necessary that Belgium should be separated " from that kingdom, and raised to the position of an " independent kingdom, which it had never at any time " been, did not think it obligatory to wait for the consent " of King William, and they proceeded to regulate the " clauses, conditions, &c., of this separation, and the " boundary lines of the new kingdom, with a view of

" subsequently causing the whole to be accepted by King " William and the prince destined to occupy the throne " of Belgium. It results from these premises that all the " portions of the Belgian provinces of the kingdom of the " Netherlands, according to the delimitation of the treaties " of 1814 and 1815, which are not specially assigned to " Belgium by the treaty of November 15th, belong still of " full right to Holland, since it is Holland which has to " cede you the whole extent of your kingdom, and not you " who cede to Holland the portions of territory which you " have occupied only on sufferance, or at most with a pro- " visional title, in the sole hope of *coercing* the King of " Holland, and keeping him, until he have signed the treaty, " in a position more disadvantageous than he would be " placed in after having signed it.

" My dear brother, the post-hour which is approaching " warns me to finish, because I think it urgent that my " letter should reach you sooner rather than later.

" I recommend it then to your serious meditation. " Consider that you have to do with two kinds of enemies, " those who would shatter your crown by war and revolution " everywhere, and those who would desire simply to destroy " a kingdom which appears to them destined to become a " focus of war and demagoguy, and who would be charmed " to make the partition of it agreeable to France. You " know my sentiments, and I think I have given you some " proof thereof, but what I say to you here is not said idly.

" I have only time to embrace you with all my heart, " and to repeat how much I love you, and that I am for life " your very devoted brother, father-in-law, and faithful friend,

" LOUIS PHILIP."

(*Retrospective Review or Private Records of the late Government:* Paris, Paulin publisher, 1848, 4to. *passim.*)

* *King Leopold to M. Le Hon.*

"January 12, 1839.

"Please to make the king acquainted with the note "which has been sent to the Conference, and the latitude "given to M. Van de Weyer. It will be best to send the "papers in question to the Queen of the Belgians, and she "will transmit them to the king. I have only time to "write thus much.

"LPLD."

* *Same to Same.*

"January 21, 1839.

"It is difficult to form an opinion about the definitive "(step); to be able to do so I await the arrival of Van "Praet, who will be back during the week.

"Keep me informed of all that passes with reference to "the formation of the ministry. If its composition were to "be good, it might still perhaps be of some use to us. I "hope you and your family do not suffer from this horrid "winter. I am ever forming very sincere wishes for you.

"LPLD."

Note of the King to M. de Decker, Minister of the Interior.

(Extract.)

"December 22, 1855.

". . . . I saved to this country the arrears of the "debt. It was considered, and the Duke de Broglie main- "tained to me, that whatever might be the modification in "respect of the debt, what had been due *before this modifica-* "*tion* ought to be paid. Ten years at 8,500,000 florins '(£726,040, about) make 85,000,000 florins (£7,260,400, "about). The debt was reduced only by my will, by my "determination not to consent to the debt which the treaty

" of November 15, 1831, had established. The capital in " fifteen years is 45,000,000 florins (£3,843,000, about). " Not counting that, there would be paid at this present " time 3,000,000 florins (£256,200, about) more. I have the " documents which prove that it is so. It is indispensable " to tell the country this sort of thing from time to time; " the private interests of individuals cause this sort of thing " —tolerably important, however—to get clean wiped out " of people's memories. . . ."

CHAPTER III.

1839—1848.

QUEEN VICTORIA AND PRINCE ALBERT—MARRIAGE OF THE DUKE DE NEMOURS—KING LEOPOLD AND PRINCE METTERNICH—DISCUSSIONS IN THE BELGIAN CHAMBERS—QUEEN LOUISE—COMMERCIAL TREATIES—THE SPANISH MARRIAGES—DISPLEASURE OF QUEEN VICTORIA—MINISTERIAL CRISIS IN BELGIUM—A NEW POLICY—DANGEROUS POSITION AND APATHY OF LOUIS PHILIP—LEOPOLD'S ADVICE UNHEEDED:—CORRESPONDENCE.

LEOPOLD had not ceased to give his attention to the alliance which was to unite the fate of his nephew Albert with the exalted destiny of Queen Victoria. In the month of October, 1839, Albert and his brother were summoned by their uncle to Brussels, whence they soon departed with a letter, in which the king recommended them to the kindness of his much-loved niece. On the 15th of October, Queen Victoria, in a touching reply, informed her uncle that she

had made known to Prince Albert her spontaneous and irrevocable decision. On the 10th of February following the marriage was celebrated.

On the 1st of March, 1840, Louis Philip accepted the ministry which under the presidency of M. Thiers was to raise so many storms. The first steps however of the new administration gave no warning of these tempests. The president of the council was very busy negotiating a marriage between the Duke de Nemours and Princess Victoria, daughter of Duke Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg-Kohary, and sister of the King of Portugal. The negotiations, conducted by the Belgian minister at Paris, directly representing King Leopold in the matter, were not a little laborious. Duke Ferdinand did not disguise his misgivings about the state of France, and Louis Philip, by the medium of the King of the Belgians, strove to reassure him.[1] All difficulties were at last cleared away, and the marriage was

[1] He wrote specially to King Leopold, April 18, 1840: ". . . . I have a conviction that we have a longer lease " than those gentlemen, and, still more, those ladies are " inclined to allow us. . . ." *Retrospective Review*, p. 362.

celebrated at the palace of St. Cloud, on the 27th of April.

The storm burst at last, when the treaty of July 15 had placed France in a new position. King Leopold, who was at Paris, watched with his usual sagacity the dispositions of the French government. M. Thiers did not seek to disguise the armaments of France, and, in a conversation he had with the King of the Belgians at the palace of St. Cloud, he even threw out a project of concentrating an army of 100,000 men on the frontier, Rhinewards. He intended by this display to give reason for reflection to the German powers who had joined England and Russia against the views of France on the Egyptian question. M. Thiers appreciated the advantages of Belgian neutrality, and manifested entire confidence in King Leopold's personal dispositions. A political review written, it was said, under his inspiration, represented the royalty born of Belgian independence as the natural and impartial mediatrix in the conflicts which might cause division between Germany, France, and England.

King Leopold had left Paris with the convic-

tion that Louis Philip desired the maintenance of peace. Louis Philip allowed M. Thiers to continue his armaments, because it was necessary to satisfy public opinion, but was not disposed to adopt an adventurous or perilous policy. The French minister, however, did not regard favourably the tendencies of the cabinet of Brussels, in which M. Lebeau had held, since April 15, the portfolio of foreign affairs—tendencies more German, as M. Thiers supposed, than French.[2]

Not only was Germany hostile to France, but still supposed that Belgium by its sentiments was enfeoffed to that power. They were not yet undeceived beyond the Rhine about the pretended guardianship which France exercised over the Belgians. This had been just declared by one of the most penetrating minds amongst our statesmen, during a mission which had permitted him to collect authentic information. "As to the importance," he said, "attached in

[2] As early as the preceding July, M. Sérurier, Minister of France at Brussels, informed his government that the *German* party was exerting itself to recover the chief influence in Belgium, and that it contained numerous and powerful elements. *Retrospective Review*, p. 361.

"Germany by princes and people to Belgium, as "an independent state, it is not yet well defined, "because there is as yet no sufficiently general "belief in our elements of nationality. They "admit the richness of our soil, and the industry "of our populations; they consider the Belgian "territory in respect of military and political "influence as an object so worthy of fixing the "attention of all Europe, that it cannot accrue to "any of the great powers without destroying at "once the existing equilibrium; and, notwith-"standing all these merits and so remarkable a "position, there is in Germany a strong incli-"nation to doubt the duration of the present "state of things: they would not even give it a "thought if the crown had not been placed on "the head of a prince whose prudence and wisdom "are everywhere so well appreciated, if they did "not attribute to his extensive influence the "brilliant position taken in Europe by the house "of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha. In the eyes of the "majority of Germans, *that* is the best guarantee "Belgium has for a lasting independence."[3]

[3] General Goblet to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, December, 1839.

Whatever might have been Louis Philip's personal feelings, there was reason to fear, nevertheless, that in the prevailing state of mental effervescence, what with the antagonism of Germany, and the profound irritation of the French people against England, the cabinet of March 1 might be dragged beyond its inclinations. Early in September King Leopold arrived at Wiesbaden. From that place he continued to correspond with Louis Philip, and to keep himself informed through his minister at Paris of the dispositions of M. Thiers and of the state of public feeling.[4] On September 7th the King of the Belgians had a long conversation with Count Munch-Bellinghausen, president of the German Diet at Frankfort, and a great friend of Prince Metternich. The king found him very sensible, very reasonable, and comprehending entirely the difficult position of Louis Philip. He was at pains to explain to him that what had reasonably hurt France in the conclusion of the treaty of July 15, was non-communication of the text, when communication ought to have been made to her

[4] M. Ed. Conway to Count Le Hon, Wiesbaden, September 7, 1840.

officially. Correspondence between the king and Count Munch became frequent; but as the latter could not be constantly at Wiesbaden, M. Nothomb, then accredited to Frankfort, served as intermediary between the king and the president of the Diet. King Leopold read to him Louis Philip's letters, and Count Munch Prince Metternich's; and he gave an account to the king of the latter, and to Count Munch of the former. Prince Metternich thus acquired a conviction that the King of the French would exert himself to maintain peace, and would consequently end by getting rid of M. Thiers. In this persuasion he was of opinion, as Louis Philip was, that Belgium ought to remain quiet, for the King of the French had been displeased at the armaments ordered by the Belgian ministry. Leopold, on his part, whilst doing full justice to M. Lebeau's patriotism, considered he had shown too much agitation, and had too easily taken alarm. The foresight of the King of the Belgians and of Prince Metternich was not slow to be realised. On the 21st of October, Louis Philip refused to be any longer associated with the warlike policy of his ministers.

The cabinet of March 1 was forthwith dissolved, and a week afterwards, October 29th, M. Thiers was replaced by M. Guizot. Louis Philip seemed, however, convinced that he had played his last card. "If this ministry is overthrown," he wrote to King Leopold (November 6th), "no "mistake about what will replace it; it is war at "any price, followed by a '93 in perfection. . . "If it is consolidated, it is peace that will "triumph; and it is only by peace that it can "be. . ."[5]

Prince Metternich, who had not shown a favourable disposition towards the Prince of Saxe-Coburg during the negotiations of 1829 and 1831, changed his attitude at this time, and quite came over to King Leopold. He having one day asked incidentally in one of his letters to Count Munch if there was anything he could do for the King of the Belgians, M. Nothomb was authorised to say that at the moment nothing would better please King Leopold than the recognition by Austria of his niece, Donna Maria, Queen of Portugal. And indeed the court of

[5] *Retrospective Review*, p. 365.

Vienna did eventually abandon the cause of Don Miguel. From 1840 King Leopold often wrote to Prince Metternich on some affair brought about by the course of events, though it cannot be said that a continuous correspondence was kept up.

The Belgian revolution having been caused and having triumphed by the union of Catholics and Liberals, King Leopold was careful not to break the alliance between the two parties. This alliance was, moreover, a necessity so long as Belgium was not definitively constituted. Up to the conclusion of the peace of 1839, then, unionism remained the dominating principle of the royal and national policy. But, by sheer force of circumstances, the cabinet of which M. Theux had been the chief, from 1834 to 1840, had little by little become transformed, and had assumed a tone more and more exclusive. This ministry having fallen in 1840, M. Lebeau formed a homogeneous liberal administration, choosing it, however, as was said, at the nearly common boundary line between the two parties. For all its moderation, this cabinet clashed with the Catholic aristocracy, which had the majority

in the Senate. The Senate adopted an address in which they demanded of the king, although in ambiguous terms, the overthrow of the ministry. It was entering upon an irregular and dangerous path, seeing that the cabinet had shown no demerit, and preserved the confidence of the Chamber of Representatives. The ministers demanded the dissolution of the Senate. The king did not listen to this legitimate wish, but, on the other hand, he pressed his advisers to keep their portfolios. They, in their turn, opposed the king's desire, and sent in their resignations. The king wished to calm party feeling; he made a mistake; the retreat of the liberal cabinet before the Catholic majority of the Senate was sure on the contrary to over-excite men's minds and raise fresh disputes. The king, however, did not deliver the power into the hands of the Catholics. M. Nothomb, one of the most eminent founders of the new kingdom, an old friend of M. Lebeau, was called, April the 13th, 1841, to the head of a unionist or mixed cabinet. "The present "cabinet," he himself said, "is the culminating "point of the situation. After it, it is almost "inevitably necessary that the power should go

" either to right or left." This prophecy was to be almost literally fulfilled.

M. Nothomb, desiring to give the Liberals at once a proof of his good faith, undertook, with the king's consent, to cause the withdrawal of a proposition which, brought forward in January, 1841, had excited loud protests: its object was to confer by special privilege the quality of "civil " person" on the Catholic university of Louvain. The episcopate having refused to spontaneously withdraw this proposition which it had suggested, M. Nothomb went to work at Rome by means of the nuncio Fornin, with whom he was very friendly, and Count d'Oultremont, Belgian minister to Gregory XVI. The king himself wrote a letter straight to the Pope, and Prince Metternich also intervened at the request of M. Nothomb, for whom Count Dietrichstein, Austrian minister at Brussels, served as intermediary. In February, 1842, the Belgian bishops, in a communication addressed to the Chamber of Representatives, declared at last that they withdrew their demand.

The king had likewise made the greatest efforts to ameliorate the industrial and com-

mercial state of the country. It was in his estimation a question of national existence; he saw in it tranquillity for Belgium and for France; he saw in it the consolidation of European peace. But the negotiations, commenced in 1840, were full of vicissitudes: France desired customs-union, King Leopold a differential treaty.

"There must be," he said, "a line of de-
"marcation of customs; the rest of Europe
"must have palpable proof that there is no in-
"corporation."

In the midst of the anxieties caused by these negotiations, there occurred, in the autumn of 1841, the last abortive attempt of the Orangemen against the throne of the King of the Belgians. Had this conspiracy been better managed, it might have acquired, for the moment, a serious character, by reawakening the hopes of William II., since October 7, 1840, King of the Netherlands, and giving an opening for a supreme effort. Leopold even confessed that such an effort, directed against Antwerp, might have had some chance of success at a time when, in consequence of general tranquillity, the Belgian army was entirely on a peace

footing, and the coveted town almost emptied of garrison.

From the time of his accession Leopold had always followed with serious attention the debates of the Belgian Chambers. By reason of the eminent talents of the chief of the cabinet, and by reason of the emulation which this very talent kept up amongst his friends of yesterday, now become his antagonists, the legislative discussions had acquired great brilliancy. The most important question which was at that time debated concerned the organization of public primary instruction. The king was extremely interested in that memorable discussion, which was preparatory to the law of September 23, 1842. The day on which he gave it sanction he addressed a very notable letter to M. Nothomb, who had supported the plan as Minister of the Interior, and who had just gained a great victory. The law of September 23 was far, however, from realising the pretensions of the episcopate, and especially of the bishop of Liège, who would have liked a direct and official part in the nominations concerning the schools. And further; that law, voted and sanctioned as a great measure of

compromise, was not spontaneously accepted by the Belgian clergy. M. Nothomb was obliged to go to work afresh at Rome by the medium of the nuncio Fornari, and Count d'Oultremont. Gregory XVI., more compliant than the clergy of Belgium, considered the law of September 23, 1842, in conformity with all that could be expected from the civil power in modern times. As for Leopold I., he feared on the people's account (and this fear was with him genuine) civil instruction without compulsory religious education; in 1860 he still wrote to M. Dechamps, who had brought up the bill of 1842: "You have long known my sentiments, and how "sincerely I believe that the existence of a "religious spirit is essential to the interest of the "populations."[6]

In October King Leopold was at the Palace of St. Cloud with Louis Philip. The Cabinet of Brussels was at that time in direct negotiation with that of the Hague, about a convention which should, by regulating the application of the general principles of the treaty of April 19,

[6] King Leopold to M. Dechamps, Minister of State, Laeken, February 24, 1860.

1839, end definitively the long differences between Belgium and Holland. M. Guizot desired that Louis Philip should decide the King of the Belgians to terminate these negotiations. "It is of the highest importance," he said, persisting in his illusion, "that this Hollando-Belgic "contention should be ended, that we may be "able to bring Holland over to the Franco-"Belgic union."[7] The convention was concluded November 5, 1842, and, after receiving the approbation of the Chambers, sanctioned February 3, 1843.

The independence of Belgium had then become, in the words of a statesman, an "article "of faith," even with diplomatists of the old school of 1815. Leopold, seeing the confirmation of the work to which he had been so valiantly devoted, thought his continual presence at the helm no longer indispensable.

He felt neither fatigue nor tedium; but, seeing peace assured, he would have liked more personal liberty. He would have desired to have, after the manner of German princes, the option

[7] M. Guizot to King Louis Philip, Auteuil, September 29 and October 11, 1842. *Retrospective Review*, p. 157.

of delegating his authority to the queen and going on long travels. From lake Como, where he was at the time he applied to his minister of the interior. M. Nothomb, in concert with the chief members of the majority which supported his administration, did not hesitate to oppose the king's desire, a desire which appeared to him, moreover, impolitic; he represented that the constitution was against an optional regency. The king ended by giving way to his minister's reasons, for he entered with a good grace into any controversy, conducted courteously and loyally. For some time he also showed great pre-occupation with another idea: feeling convinced that the queen would survive him, he wished to have fixed by the chambers the jointure mentioned in the marriage-settlements of July 28, 1832. M. Nothomb then maintained that if Belgium had the misfortune to lose the king, the patriotism and generosity of the legislature might be safely counted upon, and the king ended by submitting to this opinion also.

Queen Louise, whom Leopold would have liked to associate with himself in affairs of state, took, notwithstanding her intellect and exquisite

judgment, but an indirect part in them. She sometimes acted as intermediary between the King of the Belgians and the King of the French, or between Louis Philip and Queen Victoria. The lofty virtues with which she was endowed, her benevolence, and her inexhaustible charity, had conciliated the people's affections; but, modest as she was intellectual, she courted obscurity. "Her "policy," it was said, "was beneficence. She "busied herself with clothing the poor; not that "she was without interest in public affairs, for "she read books, reviews, journals, and important "publications to a great extent; but she did not "meddle with them. She was prodigal in charity: "her mother sometimes scolded her for it, and she "at the age of thirty-four and a queen, in 1846, "promised to be more economical for the future; "and, then, with charming timidity and with a "touching recurrence to the memory of other days, "excused herself by saying that her purse here "was better filled than it had been at Paris."[8]

Leopold, besides, would not have been able to give up interest in affairs of state: he acknowledged, indeed, that his impelling influence was

[8] *French Review* (February 1, 1866).

still very necessary. "We have to create every-"thing," he said, "for this country, for private "enterprise does scarcely anything."[9] He also said that constitutional government, above all in a small country, took a great deal of time, and kept out of sight questions which alone could assure it a political future. It was time, however, according to him, to take those questions into serious consideration if Belgium did not wish to find herself behind all other nations. He quoted the example of an association of German princes which was actively engaged in a trial of colonisation in Texas.[10] He, too, earnestly desired to establish a Belgian colony in central America. Several preliminary measures had been proposed to him, but after mature consideration, and after sending to the spot a special and confidential mission, he was obliged to acknowledge that the plan could not be followed out. Indeed, it was impressed upon him that the establishment of a colony ought to be preceded by the acquisition of territorial

[9] King Leopold to M. Dechamps, Minister of Public Works, Ardennes, May 20, 1844.

[10] King Leopold to General Goblet, Minister of Foreign Affairs, February 27, 1844.

sovereignty in the country where the colonists were to be settled; and this sovereignty it was impossible to obtain. But he regretted for a long time to come the ill-success of the attempt which had been made. "Central America," he wrote in 1851, "has become very important; it has a "future before it, and it is inconceivable how "so little interest should be bestowed upon it in "Belgium."[11]

At the same time that he was seeking for Belgian industry outlets away from Europe, Leopold hastened the conclusion of a treaty with the states composing the *Zollverein* (tariff-union). This convention was finally concluded September 1, and sanctioned December 31, 1844. As France might have descried in this treaty with Germany a hostile manifestation, and might have availed herself thereof to retard still further the arrangement in dispute since 1840, Leopold so acted that the falsity of such accusations should be fully established. Belgium, he said, was always ready to negotiate and conclude with France the most complete arrangement to which

[11] King Leopold to M. Rogier, Minister of the Interior, August 7, 1851.

France would consent.[12] But he had previously, in a letter to Louis Philip, pointed out all the difficulties in the way of this arrangement, and also the political embarrassments which would result from non-success in the treaty.[13] From the Palace of the Tuileries, where he happened to be towards the end of the year, Leopold, after passing in review all the shiftings of this negotiation since 1843, pointed out to his council the urgent necessity for satisfying France when the pretensions of the latter were reasonable.[14] The negotiation for the conclusion of a definitive treaty had experienced fresh obstacles when the moment approached for the expiry of the flax-convention, concluded with France July 16, 1842. Now Leopold had, in his own words, very frankly declared to his council that he would not share with it the responsibility of an event so disastrous as the non-renewal of the flax-convention. But as the convention did not

[12] King Leopold to General Goblet, Minister of Foreign Affairs, November 25, 1844.

[13] *Memoranda* by M. Guizot (Leipzig edition), vol. vi., p. 277.

[14] King Leopold to General Goblet, Minister of Foreign Affairs, December 17, 1844.

expire before July 16, 1846, was it necessary as early as 1845, to take steps for its renewal? The Cabinet, contrary to the king's opinion, considered such steps premature, and seemed impressed with the idea that it would be offering France fresh advantages gratuitously in return for a position which had been purchased. Leopold, who happened to be in London, saw with displeasure this revulsion in the opinion of his ministers: he fought against it long and with much warmth. "A small country," he wrote to General Goblet, "which negotiates with a power-
"ful neighbour, must profit by favourable
"moments: they do not recur so often as there is
"temptation to believe. Be good enough to dis-
"cuss the matter afresh with the council, and
"let me know the result. You are impressed
"by petty events, the result of *very shabby*
"*local intrigues;* whereas the question is about
"means of insuring the political existence of
"Belgium; and this existence is not so certain
"that it would be prudent to compromise it as
"there seems a disposition to do."[15]

[15] King Leopold to General Goblet, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Buckingham Palace, July 1, 1845.

During the autumn negotiations for a definitive treaty with France were resumed with more activity. Leopold followed their progress attentively, and took a lively interest and a large part in them. He wrote from St. Cloud to M. Dechamps, who had replaced General Goblet in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: "What takes "away much of our strength is that the political "question which used to predominate over material "interests, and which began as early as 1841 to get "fainter and fainter, is year by year less discussed "in view of the position of the ministry in the "Chamber which predominates over everything."[16] In a notable letter written some days later, he expressed himself in these terms: "If anything "can influence M. Guizot it is by no means a "rupture with Belgium as a country, for they have "taken a perfect measure here of what she could "or could not do; but certainly a fear of losing "the support he has always found in me with "respect to the grand scheme of European "policy, support on which he could always count "so long as his personal policy was in conformity

[16] King Leopold to M. Dechamps, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Saint Cloud, October 20, 1845.

" with the great and veritable interests of Europe."[17] The negotiations dragged on to the close of the year; and the king continued to be extremely attentive to them, even when he was believed to be busy hunting the wild boar in the forests of Ardennes or Saint Hubert. " In Belgium," he wrote, " people are slightly spoilt. They consider " they ought always to obtain the very best con- " ditions. I have from this point of view quite " spoilt the country by obtaining for it, fifteen " years ago, things it had not by itself alone the " least chance of getting."[18] The treaty, concluded at Paris December 13, after giving rise to some warm discussions in the Chamber of Representatives, was sanctioned July 26, 1846.

Soon afterwards (July 29th) a commercial

[17] King Leopold to M. Dechamps, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Saint Cloud, October 29, 1845.

[18] King Leopold to M. Dechamps, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ciergnon, December 14, 1845. Louis Philip wrote the same day to King Leopold (St. Cloud, December 14, 1845): " . . . . I have also to felicitate myself and you " on the conclusion of our convention and the signature " yesterday. It is a good piece of business, and it was " time it was finished; but now that it is signed, it is all the " more necessary to leave off whining over petty matters, " and to defend one's act bluntly. . . ."

treaty, succeeding a war of tariffs, was likewise signed with the Netherlands. "It is necessary," wrote Leopold at the time when he saw himself obliged to decree reprisals—"it is necessary to "preserve one's calmness and not to allow oneself "to be irritated or terrified by one's neighbours."[19] But for a long time past Leopold had found himself intangled in negotiations of quite another degree of gravity, in a question which profoundly agitated the political world, and the solution of which was about to exercise a fatal influence on the destinies of the monarchy of July. It was the question of the Spanish marriages.

It is known that the French Cabinet had declared to the chambers that it would endeavour to prevent any marriage of Queen Isabella with any prince who did not belong to the House of Bourbon. If Louis Philip dared not covet the throne of Castille for the Duke d'Aumale, who was, however, quite worthy of it, he desired, on the other hand, to shut out from it all princes who were not of the blood of Louis XIV. He also wished in any case that the hand of the

[19] King Leopold to M. Dechamps, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Saint Hubert, January 8, 1846.

Infanta, the Queen's sister, should be reserved for the Duke de Montpensier.

Now, in 1841, there dawned an idea—but upon whom and through whom nobody, according to Louis Philip and M. Guizot, knows—of giving in marriage to the Queen of Spain Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, brother of the King of Portugal, of the Duchess de Nemours, and of Prince Augustus, who in 1843 was to marry Princess Clementina d'Orléans. Prince Leopold was also nephew of the King of the Belgians and cousin-german of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. Less would have sufficed to cause this member of the family of Coburg, regarded with favour as he was by Prince Albert, who spoke of him to Lord Aberdeen, to be represented as an English candidate.[20] As for King Leopold, to avoid any chance of being reproached with having supported a candidate disagreeable to France, he abstained from making any movement direct or indirect in his nephew's favour. Louis Philip declared to M. Guizot that on this subject the King of the Belgians and himself kept up

[20] Lord Aberdeen was Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Cabinet formed by Sir Robert Peel, September 3, 1841.

an extreme reserve one towards the other. M. Guizot, disappointed, applied to M. de Sainte-Aulaire, ambassador of France in London, to endeavour to penetrate King Leopold's views. M. de Sainte-Aulaire replied, July 14, 1843: "You ask me what I know about King Leopold. "Not a great deal, and yet I have given him my "best attention. He is very deep and very close "on this particular point. During a two hours' "fence he very cleverly parried my thrusts with-"out leaving an opening once; but is not this "very reserve significant? He told me we "'must not deceive ourselves about these Spanish "'Bourbons, that they would be always hostile to "'our king, the Duke of Cadiz as well as the "'rest.' He told me also, what he assured me "he repeated over and over again to Queen "Victoria and Prince Albert, to soften any ill-"feeling against the king, that 'in such a "'question great account must be made of French "'sentiment, upon which it was the duty of our "'Government not to inflict a wound.' I went "so far as to say that Lord Aberdeen re-"garded a Coburg marriage as a very bad "combination for England, and that he would

"assuredly do nothing in the direction of that "policy. I added that I was not so certain that "the personal influence of the Court would be "quite unconcerned in the question. King "Leopold replied warmly, that I might make "myself perfectly easy on this point, and that "there was neither desire nor means of proceed- "ing in Spain otherwise than by regular diplo- "macy. In brief, my impression is that King "Leopold wishes not to displease our king; that "he will always act in a kindly spirit between us "and England; but that, after all, he is far more "Coburg than Bourbon; and that he would do "for his nephew anything he thought possible."[21]

Now-a-days one might reproach King Leopold with not having done enough—with having remained too strictly passive. Not to gall Louis Philip and the family of Queen Louise, he confined himself to saying constantly: "I will only "pronounce for my nephew's candidature if it is "of a nature to bring about harmony between "all the powers; otherwise, I shall preserve on "this subject the most absolute silence."[22]

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[21] *Memoranda* by M. Guizot, vol. viii., pp. 131, *seq.*

[22] M. de Sainte-Aulaire wrote to M. Guizot (London,

M. Bresson, ambassador of France at Madrid, nevertheless insinuated—but in a laughing fashion—that the chargé d'affaires of Belgium, beneath the shadow of Sir H. Bulwer, the minister of England, "slipped in from time to time the offer of "his Coburg."[23] But M. Bresson was ill-informed. Count Charles de Marnix, who at that time represented Belgium at Madrid, had permanent instructions to hold aloof completely, and he conformed honestly to these instructions.

The fall of Sir Robert Peel's Cabinet, and the entrance of Lord Palmerston into the ministry formed by Lord John Russell, June 26, 1846, contributed to hasten the issue of this diplomatic drama. Lord Palmerston, about a month after his installation at the Foreign Office, sent to Sir H. Bulwer instructions, in which the number of princes whose candidature for the hand of the Queen of Spain was admitted by England was

July 18, 1845): ". . . . I asked Lord Aberdeen bluntly "what King Leopold had said for his nephew, Coburg. "He answered, that King Leopold's notion was to do "nothing in favour of the marriage, and to wait and see "what the course of events might bring about. . . . ." *Retrospective Review*, p. 298.

[23] *Memoranda*, by M. Guizot, vol. viii., p. 218.

limited to three, to wit—1st, Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg; 2nd, Don Francis d'Assise, Duke of Cadiz; 3rd, Don Henry, Duke of Seville.

This despatch, dated July 19, 1816, and communicated next day to M. de Jarnac, chargé d'affaires in London, caused considerable commotion in the French Government. Here, according to M. Guizot, was certainly that probable and imminent chance of a marriage between the Queen of Spain and Prince Leopold of Coburg, which the ministry of Louis Philip had always considered and given out, left it at perfect liberty to proceed immediately to parry the blow by demanding the hand either of the Queen or of the Infanta for the Duke de Montpensier. However, Lord Palmerston, although he had placed Prince Leopold at the head of the claimants, wrote officially to Sir H. Bulwer to charge him to especially support the candidature of Don Henry, the chief of the Progressives, and the real candidate of the new cabinet.[24] Queen Victoria, Prince Albert, and King Leopold, shared

[24] *Quarterly Review*, January, 1868, p. 135.

Lord Palmerston's sentiments so far that they always wished to give the preference to a Spanish prince. But then M. Guizot had another fear. "They give up the queen," he wrote to Louis Philip, "perhaps, but with the idea of wanting "the Infanta for the Coburg when the queen is "married. . . ."[25] To parry this new blow the French government hurried on the marriage of Queen Isabella with the Infante Don Francis d'Assise, and that of the Infanta Louise Fernanda with the Duke de Montpensier. They were united on the same day, October 10th, 1846.

This victory of the descendants of Louis XIV. was, it has been truly said, more unfortunate than a defeat, for it produced chasms about the throne of Louis Philip. If the King of the Belgians, by his great influence, had made his nephew's candidature triumphant, would he not have rendered a notable service to all the world, even to France? The only objection Louis Philip could have made is that Prince Leopold

[25] Louis Philip to M. Guizot, Neuilly, July 25, 1846, and M. Guizot to Louis Philip, Val Richer, August 8, 1846. *Retrospective Review*, pp. 185 and 197.

of Saxe-Coburg was not a Bourbon. But the tranquillity of Spain, the happiness of Queen Isabella, and the harmony of Europe, were interested in not pushing to extremes the superannuated traditions of Louis XIV.[26]

Louis Philip soon saw that England's pride was sorely wounded. Queen Victoria, in replying to the announcement of the marriage of the Duke de Montpensier with the Infanta Louise Fernanda, had not disguised her displeasure.[27] Louis Philip, greatly moved, begged his daughter, the Queen of the Belgians, to transmit to the Queen of England a sort of justificatory memorandum. He foresaw the evils which would overwhelm the world if the present storm, he said, did not end in the maintenance and consolidation of the precious *cordial understanding*,

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[26] *Quarterly Review*, January, 1868, p. 132.

[27] Queen Victoria to Queen Mary Amelia, Osborne, September 10, 1846. *Retrospective Review*, p. 116. In November, 1849, Louis Philip, discoursing at Claremont about these Spanish marriages, said that he had all but embroiled himself with Queen Victoria, and that he would have embroiled himself with all Europe had it needs been so. *Abdication of Louis Philip, narrated by himself* (Paris, 1851, 12mo., p. 81).

which alone could insure safety.[28] At the same time he begged the Prince de Joinville, who was then with his squadron in the Bay of Naples, to abstain from all contact with the English, so as to give no opportunity for more serious incidents.[29] King Leopold united his intervention to the kind offices of the Queen of the Belgians in scattering the clouds which had collected between the two courts. It was but justice Louis Philip rendered when he wrote to him: "Whatever may be the result of your kind "efforts to bring Queen Victoria to a more

[28] In this letter, dated Neuilly, September 14, 1846, Louis Philip attributed all that was happening to the influence of Lord Palmerston: ". . . . The queen," he proceeded, "sees things now only through Lord Palmer- "ston's glasses, and those glasses too often falsify and "distort. It is perfectly simple. The great difference "between the glasses of that excellent Aberdeen and those "of Lord Palmerston proceeds from the difference of their "natures: Lord Aberdeen liked to be well with his friends: "Lord Palmerston, I fear, likes to quarrel with them. This "it is, my dear Louise, which caused me to fear for our "cordial understanding when Lord Palmerston resumed "the direction of the Foreign Office. . . ." *Retrospective Review*, pp. 17, *seq.*

[29] Louis Philip to the Prince de Joinville, La Ferté-Vidame, September 16, 1846. *Retrospective Review*, p. 249.

"sound and just appreciation of the whole busi-
"ness, I am anxious to thank you for them, and
"to say how sensible I am of them."[30]

Louis Philip, trusting to his own ability, and in the imperturbable calm of his chief counsellor, instead of being disturbed by the state of France when there began to appear in all directions symptoms of sullen discontent, took fright at the constitutional agitation which became manifest in Belgium.

M. Nothomb showed correct foresight when he said that, if the cabinet of April 13th, 1841, fell, power would incline almost inevitably towards the right or the left. Although this statesman, in the partial reconstruction of his administration, April 16th, 1843, had endeavoured to draw as near to the left as to the right, he could not conciliate both sides, but found antagonists equally on each. After having held power for more than four years, and signalised his course by remarkable activity and the rarest talents, M. Nothomb retired before the opposition openly declared against his policy in the

[30] Louis Philip to the King of the Belgians, Saint Cloud, November 1, 1846.

elections of June, 1845. Deprived of this adviser, who went to fill the part of minister-plenipotentiary of Belgium at Berlin, Leopold, after some parleying with M. Rogier, wished to try once more the unionist system, for which he had always had the same preference. He made an appeal to the devotion of M. Van de Weyer, his representative at the court of London, whose liberalism, attested by some remarkable writings, by speeches delivered in the congress of 1830, and by the part he had taken in the creation of the free university of Brussels, was above suspicion. M. Van de Weyer consented to take the direction of a new mixed cabinet. He entered upon office July 30th, 1845, and went out March 31st, 1846, acknowledging the impossibility of maintaining any longer harmony between the different factions of the majority which supported him. He knew—and it is a great political virtue—how to make a timely retreat.

The king, whatever his sympathies might be, was then obliged to try a new path. He first offered to M. Rogier, representing moderate liberalism, the duty of reconstituting the ministry; but there was no coming to an understanding on

one of the essential items of the programme, M. Rogier demanding, and the king refusing him the power, till the elections of 1847, of, in certain eventualities, dissolving the Chambers. The Liberals and the Unionists being put aside or put off, recourse was necessarily had to the statesman who had held power from 1834 to 1840. M. de Theux formed, March 31st, 1846, a homogeneous Catholic administration, which was immediately attacked with the greatest energy.

Before long the principal electoral association of Brussels summoned for June 14th at the Mansion House a *Liberal Congress*, which was to be composed of delegates from the associations of the provinces. The mere announcement of this assembly caused indignation, fear, and stupefaction to Louis Philip. On May 14th he wrote to King Leopold: "... Your letters and "all the information I gather about the situation "of Belgium ferment in my brain on the sub- "stratum of my experience and of the revolu- "tionary storms which have occurred before my "eyes. Above all, this assembly of delegates of "the Belgian associations which is to meet at "Brussels makes me anxious. It recalls to my

" mind nothing more or less than the Commune " of Paris in 1792 dictating from the Mansion " House to the National Convention in the " Tuileries (after the disappearance of royalty) all " they pleased to impose upon it, and going to the " extent of sending to its bar audacious deputa- " tions to make a report next day of the decrees " passed the evening before." Louis Philip offered his assistance in case the Belgian government found itself powerless before this audacious meeting; he further advised King Leopold to carefully keep his present ministry, and prevent the access to power of the delegates, their adherents, and those of their political colour. Shaken just for a moment by the apprehensions of the diplomatic body and by the vehement entreaties of the King of the French, Leopold soon recovered his tranquillity. In concert with his ministers (they are entitled to this piece of justice), he would not interfere with a constitutional right, having confidence, moreover, in the good sense of the Belgian people. This confidence was not misplaced. The three hundred delegates who met at the Mansion House of Brussels, representatives, burgomasters, common councilmen, working

men, etc., deliberated with the greatest calmness, and at a single sitting drew up the Act of Federation as well as the programme of Belgian Liberalism.

The cabinet, breached by the adherents of the Liberal Congress, fell to pieces at the elections of June, 1847. Leopold once more did not follow the recommendations of the King of the French: he did not adopt, as the basis of his reign, that fatal word *resistance*, which prevailed in the counsels of the Tuileries. On the 12th of June ministers had given in their resignation to the king. Two months afterwards, August 12th, M. Rogier took office with a liberal administration, which formally announced a *new policy*.

Happy had it been for Louis Philip if he had imitated the King of the Belgians—if he too had commenced a new policy. The danger was becoming pressing. It was the time when Prince Metternich, scared at the reforms which Pius IX. was accomplishing, cried: "Lived to see a "liberalising Pope!" It was the time when a noble prince exclaimed, in anguish: ". . . . We "come before the Chambers with an execrable "state of things at home, and abroad the situation

" is not much better. All that is the king's sole " doing. . . . Those wretched Spanish marriages! " We have not yet exhausted the depth of bitter- " ness they contain. . . ."[31] It was finally the time when M. Thiers said: " France is advancing " with a giant's stride towards a catastrophe."

King Leopold saw the storm gathering. He too foresaw a catastrophe, and he tried to conjure it away—to be beforehand with it. He did not disguise his fears from the queen's family. As early as 1847 he had salutary warning conveyed to Louis Philip, and counsels transmitted, in which his melancholy forebodings were pointed out; he attempted, in fact, to open the old king's eyes. But Louis Philip, as has been said, no longer listened to advice; he was immovable; he lacked both power and will to take a manly resolution.

Subjoined is the correspondence connected with the chapter.

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[31] Prince de Joinville to the Duke de Nemours, on board *The Sovereign*, at Spezzia, November 7, 1847. *Retrospective Review*, p. 481.

CORRESPONDENCE.

The King of the Belgians to Queen Victoria.

(Translation.)

" Laeken, October 8, 1839.

" MY VERY DEAR VICTORIA,

" Your cousins will themselves be the bearers of this " letter. I commend them to your *kind notice.* They " are good, honest fellows, who deserve your sympathy, who " have no sort of affectation, but are really full of sensibility " and worthy of confidence. I have told them that your " great desire is that they should be quite at home with " you.

" I am sure that if you have anything to recommend " to them, they will be most happy to learn your wishes.

" My dear Victoria,

" Your most devoted uncle,

" LEOPOLD."

Queen Victoria to the King of the Belgians.

(Translation.)

" Windsor Castle, October 15, 1839.

" DEAREST UNCLE,

" This letter, I am sure, will give you pleasure, for you " have always shown a lively interest in all that affects my

" happiness. My decision is taken, and I this morning de-
" clared it to Albert. The lively affection he testified on
" learning it gave me great pleasure. He seems to me per-
" fection itself, and I think I may count on being very
" happy with him. I love him more than I can say, and I
" will do everything in my power to render this sacrifice of
" his, for I feel that it is one, as slight as it can be. He
" appears to have great tact, a very necessary quality in his
" future condition. The last few days have passed like a
" dream, and have thrown me into such a state of agitation
" that I scarcely know how to write to you: but I feel very
" happy. It is indispensable that this determination should
" be known only to you and Uncle Ernest,[1] until Parliament
" meets again, as otherwise I might be found fault with for
" not summoning Parliament to hear the news.

" Lord Melbourne, whom I of course consulted on this
" matter, approves entirely of my choice, and expresses
" great satisfaction at the event, which he considers in every
" way desirable.

" Lord Melbourne behaved towards me, as he always
" does behave, with the greatest tenderness and affection.
" We think, too, and Albert is of our opinion, that the
" marriage should take place shortly after the meeting of
" Parliament, about the beginning of February.

" Pray, dearest uncle, forward these two letters to Uncle
" Ernest, whom you will bind to the most absolute silence;
" and you will explain to him, as well as to our faithful
" Stockmar,[2] all those details that I have not time to give
" them.

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[1] Ernest I., reigning duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha.

[2] After the accession of King Leopold, Baron Stockmar supplied his place of adviser to Princess Victoria. He had also just accompanied Prince Albert on his travels in Italy.

" I think you might also tell Louise (the Queen of the " Belgians), but say nothing to any of her family.

" I wish to keep the dear young folks here until the " end of next month. Ernest's sincere pleasure causes " me great joy. He does so adore his dear brother Albert.

" Ever, dearest uncle,

" Your devoted niece,

" V. R."

* *King Leopold to M. Le Hon.*

" Brussels, November 5, 1840.

" I have, since my return, discussed the question mooted " by the king and the French ministry of a treaty of com- " merce and customs, and I will impart to you the results " as they present themselves up to this time.

" I cannot conceal from you that the first impression " was that it would be impossible to arrive at an arrange- " ment of this nature without disaffecting in a rather dan- " gerous manner the populations of our country. You " know that our people are excessively susceptible, and they " have preserved a very sorry remembrance of the vexations " of the Empire, as well as of the different unpopular im- " posts of King William. M. de Muelenaere, who is pretty " well acquainted with the spirit of the populations of " Flanders, thinks that it will be above all the tobacco " excise which will offer the greatest difficulties. For my " part I think that, if Belgium were to sacrifice her share in " the revenue from tobacco excise, to modify whatever there " is odious in this impost, we might reach the object with- " out for that purpose exposing France to lose the consider- " able revenue which reverts to her from the impost on " tobacco. When once you have had communicated to you " any plan of treaty, I reserve to myself the opportunity of

" entering more fully into the question of tobacco, which, as " I think, will probably be the most difficult to solve. After " a very conscientious and impartial examination, we arrived " at the conviction which I had already expressed to you at " Paris, that it is indispensable, to give the treaty a purely " commercial character, to keep out of it any clause which " might be of an administrative nature, whilst fully giving " the guarantees which France has a right to demand. " There would have to be, of course, entire homogeneity in " respect of the customs-dues, and we should have to ac- " count to the French Government for the frank and fair " application of these dues. I shall not enter into admini- " strative details before knowing the plans which you will do " well to demand of M. Duchâtel, minister of finance; but " I think it of high importance that you should take the " initiative to make him understand from the very first what " are the matters which will have to be removed from " any plan if there is a desire to see it adopted. If the " French Government be willing to follow this line of " moderation and wisdom, I think we shall be able to arrive " at a completion of the treaty in question; but it can only " be by conforming to the counsels and opinions you have " already given them. Send me soon, I beg, information of " whatever steps shall be taken in this important business. " It is of consequence to know soon the turn the business is " about to take. I recommend it to your attention, and I " am, with very sincere sentiments,

" LPLD."

* *Same to Same.*

" Brussels, January 27, 1841.

" I have read with much interest your letter of the 25th.

" Be persuaded of this, that it has become IMPOSSIBLE,

" especially in the present position of the grand policy of " Europe, to conclude with France anything but a *differen-* " *tial treaty.* It may be either a little treaty bearing on two " or three branches of industry, or indeed a large treaty " which should comprehend the aggregate of the productions " of the two countries. There must be a *customs-line* " between the two countries; the rest of Europe must have " PALPABLE *proof* that there is no INCORPORATION. The " four other powers, whose signature is on our treaty,[3] have " already pronounced *against* a *union* of customs; they " declare that such a union would put an end to the posi- " tion the treaty assures to us; that our neutrality would " cease in fact and law; that we should be no more than a " French province, which the powers would no longer " respect. In this kingdom, where the importance of the " neutrality is beginning to be understood, its maintenance " is desired, and the majority would oppose with all their " might any measure which might strike a blow at it.

" A differential treaty with France would assure to it the " friendship of Belgium quite as well as a union of customs, " and in the state of isolation in which France is likely " to remain *a long while*, even though she united in confer- " ence with the other four powers, this friendship is not to " be despised, and so much the less in that Germany makes " us many extremely kind, and, I have reason to believe, " serious and sincere advances.

" To explain more clearly my ideas, I adjoin copies of " some notes I gave last year to M. Thiers.

" I recommend to your attention this important busi- " ness. To labour under no illusion it is necessary to feel " the *impossibility* of a customs-*union*, but that a differential

[3] The treaty of April 19, 1839.

" treaty, in which the two countries should make themselves " a special position, is not only feasible, but may become " very advantageous for both.

" Good wishes to you and your family. I am pleased " to be able to express to you how sensible I am of the " proofs you have never ceased to give me of devotion and " attachment.

" LEOPOLD."

* *Same to Same.*

" January 28, 1841.

" I hoped to be able to add the notes to day, but I see " that divers changes of some importance will be necessary; " and consequently I wish, meanwhile, to send you these " lines by way of van-guard.

" My idea would be that all the produce of the two " countries should be reciprocally free, except, by the way, " salt and tobacco; and that the productions of the industry " of both countries should be so likewise. That the manu- " factures might be in a position of conformity, Belgium " would adopt, in respect of the raw materials which enter " into the composition of the various articles, the French " tariffs. These same tariffs would be adopted for all foreign " manufactured articles.

" The French excises would continue adopted. The " excises, however, would continue separate, and tobaccos, " etc., would not enter France. No raw material coming " from abroad would be able to be transported from one " country into the other without paying the duty established " by tariff. Belgium would not, then, be able to compete " with the commerce of the French ports, which would give " considerable satisfaction to the ports which might fear " Antwerp. I merely trace out some perfectly general lines,

" to indicate my manner of looking at the question, and I " beg you will soon communicate to me your opinion about " it all."

King Leopold to M. Le Hon.

(Extract.)

"November 20, 1841.

" . . . . When a government has, as ours has, hands " tied behind its back, there is no shame in confessing it. " There is no shame, either, in demanding assistance, when " the case occurs, from one's allies, when one is entirely on " a *peace footing*, and paying to a neighbouring country the " ninth part of the revenues of the State for the enjoyment " of this peace. I have some reason to believe that, if the " plot had succeeded, King William would have brought his " household and the garrison which he has to his hand by " steamboat to Antwerp. Disembarking there with six " thousand men, as he might have done in twenty-four hours, " he had been master of the place, for the Scheldt is now " completely undefended. The maritime force he has at " his disposal is naturally a force against which we have not " a shadow of defence, and we cannot in a time of complete " peace maintain a garrison of from ten to twelve thousand " men at Antwerp: it is nearly all the infantry we have.

" The treaty[4] is really necessary for us, and France also " cannot count on tranquillity on its northern frontier " except by concluding this treaty. To remain as we are is " utterly impossible: so if the treaty is not concluded France " will have to keep a strong force on its frontier, and, besides, " prepare to see arise from this muddle, *every moment, reasons* " *for general war.* The deputy would not find that VERY

[4] The commercial treaty.

" AMUSING, with the bill to pay for last year, etc. I hope " we shall bring our great work to a happy termination, and " in your hands it is under good management.

"LP."

* *King Leopold to General Goblet, Minister of Foreign Affairs.*

" February 27, 1844.

" . . . . Constitutional government, especially in a small " country, takes a great deal of time, *and causes sight to be* " *lost of the questions which alone can secure to the country a* " *political future.* I have many a time believed that I saw " you feeling more and more interest therein, and I am very " anxious that it should be so, for it is time to be seriously " occupied with those questions; otherwise Belgium will " find herself *at the tail* of all other nations.

" I have heard that an association of German princes is " actively occupied in an attempt at colonisation in Texas. " My nephew Leiningen[5] has promised me information, and " I mention the fact to you as a proof of the progress this " sort of enterprise is making."

* *King Leopold to M. A. Dechamps, Minister of Public Works.*

" Ardennes, May 20, 1844.

" I was greatly grieved at the accident which took place " on the railway. Please have information forwarded to me " about this sad event.

" I take the opportunity of speaking to you of the " financial part of the railway. We have already several " times discussed this important question. I am persuaded " that an augmentation of 800,000 francs (£32,000) might

[5] The Prince of Leiningen, issue of the first marriage of Princess Victoria of Saxe-Coburg, afterwards Duchess of Kent.

" be obtained, and that would be a great benefit. We have " to CREATE EVERYTHING *for* this country, for private enter- " prise does next to nothing. New imposts are difficult, if " not impossible; and there remains, therefore, no other " resource but to make the best of things as they are.

" One is often stopped for fear of causing displeasure. " I think that could be pretty well avoided, but it would be " desirable to pay attention *at once* to the changes it might " seem good to make, since it is better that it should be " in time to prevent its becoming the exclusive pabulum " of the press and the idlers. With reference to the com- " mercial question with which the Chamber is occupied, " I must repeat what I said on the 12th. There is so great " a confusion of ideas about the details, that the immediate " result of a vote of the Chamber *could not at first be any-* " *thing but the expression* OF A PRINCIPLE: on that there would " be a fine majority; on the details I fear there would be " an absurd display, and it would end in nothing at all.

" Please give me your ideas on this question, in which " you are keenly interested.

" LPLD."

* *King Leopold to General Goblet, Minister of Foreign Affairs.*

" Laeken, August 26, 1844.

" I have received an interesting letter from Prince " Metternich.

" He spoke about our affairs to the King of Prussia, and " found him very well disposed: the king and the prince " were impressed with the *utility* of an arrangement. The " prince's advice is to make advances to Prussia, whose " position is more constrained; and he thinks the moment " IS FAVOURABLE.

"This comes very conveniently for our measure; we "shall do well to throw it into the form of a letter, and so "leave Prussia without excuse.

"LEOPOLD."

* *Same to Same.*

"November 25, 1844.

"Perhaps the difficulty of the negotiation with France "might be put thus: 'Belgium is accused of sentiments "'hostile to France; she turns towards Germany, etc. "'Belgium could not give more evident proof of the falsity "'of these accusations than by declaring herself prepared "'from this very day to negotiate and conclude with "'France the most complete arrangement to which France "'shall be willing to consent, and in which might be in-"'cluded literary property (*alias* piracy), etc.' In this way, "1st, would be shown proof of good-will; 2nd, would be "avoided all talk of a phantom of convention. It is always "better to avoid with politeness, than to say: *We* do not want "such or such a thing, since people then return to Paris and "cry: *The Belgians do not want to negotiate with us.* . . ."

* *King Leopold to M. A. Dechamps, Minister of Foreign Affairs.*

"Saint-Cloud, October 20, 1845.

"MY DEAR MINISTER,

"My intention was to write you a long letter to-day, "but the state of the negotiation is not yet sufficiently "developed; there are still too many doubts not to make "me reserve my arguments for a later period.

"What takes from us much of our power is that the "political question, which *used to dominate material interests*, "and which in 1841 was already beginning to get weak, is

" year by year less attended to in view of the position of " ministry in the Chamber which *dominates everything.* " Prince de Ligne,[6] who is very zealous to be useful, and " Van Praet, have given you an account of the details of the " negotiation.

" A very important point is the figure to which should " be limited the importation of yarns at the present duty, " and the scale to be established beyond that figure.

" The clause which would give France the power of " extending to other countries the favours granted to " Belgium is of but little importance, since *the French in-* " *dustry itself will render that power impossible to exercise.* " As England figures there first, it is a little punishment " for the concession made gratis in 1842 to Germany, " and further it is intended for the Chamber, which was " hurt to see its liberty of action submitted to the good " pleasure of Belgium. This clause has a certain par- " liamentary importance for the ministry here. It would " be for consideration whether, whilst accepting it, Belgium " would not reserve to herself the power of abandoning the " convention in case the advantages granted to other " countries should destroy the advantages of the privilege " she has purchased. I must repeat that I think that " France will not be in a position to use the latitude she " reserves to herself, but the parliamentary position in " Belgium will have to be taken into consideration.

" The third point touches the resolution of July 14.[7] " In part it is a parliamentary question, and the interests of " a part of France crop out here. M. Cunin-Gridaine[8] " sticks to it with *excessive tenacity.* If we can avoid con-

[6] The Prince de Ligne was at that time Belgian ambassador in Paris.

[7] Resolution of July 14 relative to wool.

[8] Minister of Commerce in France.

" cessions, it will be necessary to do so; but as a last " resource it will be necessary to adopt the step anticipated " at the last council which was held at Laeken.

" The manufacture of woollen fabrics having only a " market in the interior, cannot be compared with the othe " manufactures in point of importance and profit. Parlia- " mentary considerations deserve the greatest attention; but " to have Chambers, it *is necessary first to have a country*, and " I ask how and *wherewith* to fill the void which the cessa- " tion of the convention would produce. The evil would " be so much the greater in that the country has on all " these questions a way of being *perfectly* CHILDISH, *sub-* " *mitting to no sort* of privation. The Government has on " this head ample experience; and as for its liberty of " action, or its hope of finding the country disposed to make " any sacrifice whatever to reach an object, even with no " remote probability, they would be the cruellest deceptions, " for it would get nothing but the bitterest reproaches by " way of recompense.

" I hope, my dear minister, that this letter will find you " in good health, for I attach *great value* to the preservation " of a minister so well informed, so good, and so devoted as " you.

" LPLD."

* *Same to Same.*

" Saint-Cloud, October 29th, 1845.

" I write you in haste a few lines to hurry on decisions at " Brussels.

" As my point of departure, I must tell you that " M. Guizot thinks that it would not be a bad thing for " both countries to give them the *lesson* to be derived from " a temporary interruption of commercial relations, as it

" would put them in a better position for weighing recipro-
" cally the worth and importance of the relations which have
" existed until now. There is sense in this way of looking
" at things, and it is suggested especially by the outcries
" raised in Belgium on the one hand and France on the
" other. He says further that the conditions he proposes
" are not what he would personally entertain with pleasure,
" but what he knows would have a chance of success with
" the French Chamber, which he professes to know
" thoroughly. That it is therefore perfectly useless to
" haggle over these proposals, since it is not a negotiation
" of government with government, where there is a question
" of scrupulously measured concessions on both sides, but
" the point is what an assembly, whose opinions are known,
" will be disposed to allow. This is an answer to the idea
" which might prevail at Brussels that a long negotiation, a
" delay of some months or a year, would change the quasi-
" moral aspect of the matter. I am convinced that
" M. Guizot will do what he thinks possible, but that he will
" do *no more* in a year, but *probably less*, for time is evi-
" dently against Belgium.

" Four years ago, at a similar epoch, a very suitable
" treaty might have been made; we might have obtained
" release from restrictions, a reduction on irons, etc., etc.

" You will remember what passed, and its results.

" The convention which shall not be signed till the
" 6th or 8th of November, or some days later, will probably
" never be.

" If anything can influence M. Guizot, it is certainly not
" a rupture with Belgium as a country, for they have taken
" an accurate measure here of what it could and could not
" do; but, in fact, the loss of the support he has always had
" from me in respect of the grand policy of Europe, support on

" which he has always been able to count when his personal " policy was in conformity with the great and true interests " of Europe. As concerns the political position in Belgium, " I think that if we get nothing concluded now, the " ministry will be excessively persecuted by the opposition, " which will do anything in the world to prevent the con- " clusion of a new convention. Its tactics will not be " difficult; it will only have to exaggerate the outcries of " the manufacturers, who will believe that they are practising " a piece of *admirable policy* by displaying more and more " fanaticism against a convention.

" The opposition, in the second place, is greatly " interested in plunging the manufacturers of Ghent into " distress, so as to profit by it in the coming elections.

" The resolution of July 14 is an embarrassment. That " must be met, and the idea put forward of the limitation " of importation of French fabrics is a wise and practical " idea, which relieves Belgium of the fear of seeing herself " ruined by excessive importation of woollen fabrics of " French make. The convention which Belgium can make " with France is not a bad one, and there is good policy " in not encouraging the idea that Belgium can find a " market only in France. However, even if this idea did " not exist, here, where industry is very exclusive, it will not " suffer Belgium to participate beyond a certain limit in its " market.

" Time presses, and I must finish. My intention is to " start from here on the 8th, and arrive on Sunday, the " 9th. The speech will have to be sent to me.[9] I must " sum up with a pressing recommendation to put us in a

[9] The speech from the throne at the opening of the Chambers.

" position to speedily terminate the business here. I think " that in the interest of the ministry itself it would be of " importance.

" LPLD."

* *Same to Same.*

" Ardennes, December 8th, 1845.

" MY DEAR MINISTER,

" As it may be of importance not to lose an instant in " the negotiation which is taking place at Paris at this " moment, I give you *in advance*, FREE LEAVE *for my consent* " to all that can be signed at Paris. I think that the " important part is to obtain a tolerable figure for the " limitation of cloth. As to the woollen fabrics, I have " never varied: if this country can *itself* make in four or " six years what England brings us, which is estimated at " 200,000 kilogrammes (450,000 lbs., about), it will have " done a great deal. Against common fabrics even the " old duty is a sufficiently good protection, and the industry " of woollen fabrics, to be robust, must get established " without too much protection.

" I saw on the Meuse a large number of boats with " coal going up the river. It would, however, be expedient " not to refuse all favour on this river, which will continue " to be for many years the principal means of communica- " tion with one part of France.

" Let us hope the news from Paris will be good.

" LPLD."

* *Same to Same.*

" Ardennes, December 9th, 1845.

" MY DEAR MINISTER,

" I add Van Praet's few remarks. It might have been " better, but I think, as he does, that there were engage- " ments on their part.

" In France the Chamber is altogether in the prohibitive " mood, and even M. Thiers is, as a consequence of the " imperial system, favourable to that.

" The convention is not a bad arrangement, and I " advise the council from this day forth not to fall into the " mistake *of saying it is a bad convention.*

" On the other hand, it is true that we could willingly " have accepted better conditions. The six years' duration, " however, is a boon again, for four was very short. In " conclusion, then, I think (and believe me) it is better than " if there had been a catastrophe; and the country will " comprehend this.

" LPLD."

* *Same to Same.*

" Ciergnon, December 14th, 1845.

" I have just received your letter. I hope the matter " may be considered in Paris as *finished*: the enormous " danger, in dealing with France, consists, so to speak, in " her individuality. To explain this, I must give by way " of example any event whatever, such as a serious illness " of the marshal;[10] a disagreement amongst the ministers, " etc., would cause the convention to be put off *for two* " *years.*

" In Belgium, people are a little spoilt; they consider " they ought always to obtain the very best conditions; I " have from this point of view spoilt the country, by obtain- " ing for it, fifteen years ago, things which *by itself alone* it " had not *the slightest chance of getting.* This habit becomes " quite injurious when the Chamber shows it, and, I must " repeat, it is necessary to make those gentry understand

[1] Marshal Soult, President of the Council of Ministers.

" that, when in a matter of transaction, the footing is one of " reciprocity, the fact must be recognized.

" I must really commend this to the notice of the " council, for it would be a great mistake to consider the " convention a bad one, and governments often think to " wheedle their enemies by such language. The only effect " then produced is this: *Government* ITSELF declares *that it* " *has done a very bad* stroke of business. To-morrow I shall " be at Laeken.

" LPLD."

* *Same to Same.*

" Laeken, December 15th, 1845.

" MY DEAR MINISTER,

" What has just happened in England, and overthrown " the strongest and best minister,[11] proves to you the enor- " mous danger of losing time. I cannot therefore but " express to you my satisfaction at the signature. Take " care of your health, which is very precious to me.

" LPLD."

* *Same to Same.*

" December 16th, 1845.

" Herewith you have the papers relating to the con- " vention.

" I think it looks well; the limitation is an evil rather " in appearance than in reality. If it had been possible to " get 4,000,000 kilogrammes (9,000,000 lbs., about) for " cloths, it would have been nice; but 3,000,000 is still a " pretty nice figure, and six years are better than four.

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[11] Sir Robert Peel had been obliged to resign, December 12, 1845, but Lord John Russell having vainly attempted to replace him, he came into power again on the 20th.

" We must add, again, to these considerations, that too " nice a convention had a prospect of being rejected by the " French Chamber.

" LPLD."

King Leopold to M. Nothomb, Minister Plenipotentiary of Belgium at Berlin.

(Extract.)

" Ardennes, January 16, 1846.

" . . . . I will commence by thanking you for your " interesting letter. Your way of looking at things hither- " ward as well as Germany-ward was very just and judicious. " It is indisputable that good and fair results have been " obtained, and if it were not for those wretched *potatoes*, " which have really, and by way of pretext, served to raise " an outcry, we should be extremely well off, for the majority " of the industries are going on well, and the price of cereals " is favourable to cultivators.

" What is to seek for this country is a more robust " national feeling, which exists amongst the people, but is " feeble *and fragmentary* (*und getheilt*) amongst the higher " classes. A large proportion of what remains to us of the " nobility is very patriotic.

" Sound judgment also is not our brilliant quality. In- " cessantly one has to ask how such consequences could " possibly be deduced from given premises.

" Hitherto royalty has been the rock on which the " political existence of the country has exclusively rested; " after fifteen years many folks have not yet arrived at a " notion of that. Perhaps royalty makes too little parade of " its work; on the other hand, the work is so much the " more solid. . . .

" LEOPOLD."

King Louis Philip to the King of the Belgians.

"Paris, May 14, 1846.

"I am writing to you from the council-table. Your "letters and all the information I can gather about the "situation of Belgium ferment in my head, a-top of my old "experience and the revolutionary storms which have passed "before my eyes. It is above all this assembly of delegates "of Belgian associations which is going to meet at Brussels "that makes me anxious. It reminds me of nothing less "than the commune of Paris of 1792, dictating from the "Mansion House to the National Convention at the "Tuileries (after the disappearance of royalty) all it pleased "to impose, and going so far as to send to the bar deputies "who made reports next day of the decrees it had pro-"nounced the evening before.

"I know of no means to be furnished by Belgian "legislation for paralysing, striking down, and stamping out "this audacious meeting, if it do not allow of prevention, "which would always be preferable. They say the Belgian "constitution authorises associations; but I know not how "far this authorisation extends, and I doubt whether it can "extend, even in law, to authorising the formation of an "assembly of delegates, an assembly elected without legal "authority, deliberating, taking resolutions, just as Chambers "legally elected and exercising constitutional powers with "which they are invested by the constitution and law of the "country. It is nothing less, in my eyes, than a national "revolutionary convention established, since it would be so "established independently of the laws and the constitu-"tional authority of royalty, and even probably without con-"nection with the legal government of the country.

"I talked over the matter just now with my ministers, "and there was among them but one outcry at the in-

" compatibility of such a state of things with the existence " of the legal and constitutional government of the country. " Thank God, this state of things does not yet exist, at " least to this extent; but do not forget that it is precisely " from the absence of all legal rule in their creation that " revolutionary assemblies derive their power of destroying " legal institutions, and that the latter suffer themselves to " be intimidated by the outrageous audacity of the others.

" We are by no means disposed to allow the Belgian " crisis to reach such extremities; but none the more to " step beyond the limits traced out for us by treaties and " our respect for the independence and neutrality of the " kingdom of Belgium.

" Seeing before us the possibility of such events, I feel " the need of knowing your opinion:

" 1st. As to what you think you can do to prevent " them.

" 2nd. As to what, in case your government turned out " to be powerless, and again, in case it were swamped, " you would think you ought and could ask of us. We " should not, and would not do anything unless you took " the initiative; but we must use prevision, and concert " what rapid storms may unexpectedly demand.

" Post-time does not allow me to write more at length. " Take good care of your present ministry; support it as " vigorously as ever you can. Nothing would be better " suited for a general disturbance than a ministerial crisis, " and especially than the entry into the ministry of the " delegates, their adherents, and those of their political " tone."

Queen Victoria to Queen Mary Amelia.

" Osborne, September 10, 1846.

" MADAM,

" I have just received your Majesty's letter of the 8th " inst., and I hasten to thank you for it. You will re- " member, perhaps, what passed at Eu between the King " and me. You know the importance I have ever attached " to the maintenance of our cordial understanding, and the " zeal with which I have laboured for it. You have heard, " without doubt, that we refused to further the marriage " between the Queen of Spain and our Cousin Leopold " (which the two queens[12] had earnestly desired), with the " sole aim of not holding aloof from a course which would " be more agreeable to the King, although we could not " consider that course the best. You can easily understand, " then, that the sudden announcement of this *double marriage* " could not but cause us surprise and very lively regret.

" I ask pardon, madam, for addressing you on politics " at this juncture, but I like to be able to tell myself that I " have ever been sincere with you.

" Begging you to present my respects to the King, I " am, Madam,

" Your Majesty's wholly devoted sister and friend,

" VICTORIA R."

[12] Queens Christina and Isabella.

CHAPTER IV.

1848– 1850.

FLIGHT OF LOUIS PHILIP—STEADINESS OF BELGIUM IN THE MIDST OF EUROPEAN DISTURBANCE—PRINCE METTERNICH TAKES REFUGE IN BELGIUM—ERECTION OF A MONUMENT IN HONOUR OF THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF 1831—LEOPOLD'S DELUSION THAT QUEEN LOUISE WOULD SURVIVE HIM—ILLNESS AND DEATH OF QUEEN LOUISE—FUNERAL ORATION DELIVERED BY FATHER DECHAMPS—ADDRESSES OF CONDOLENCE—LEOPOLD'S REPLY—CORRESPONDENCE.

Whilst Louis Philip, unattended and a fugitive, was landing on the shores of England, twenty peoples were rising and fighting for their independence, their nationality, or their liberty. But the Belgians remained calm and unshaken; grouped, without distinction of parties, about the throne which they had themselves in 1831 built up, and trusting in the prince who was as it were identified with the most liberal constitution of

the Continent, they showed themselves resolved to maintain the work of the national congress. At sight of this noble and loyal attitude on the part of the nation, Leopold, far from dreaming of descending from the throne, determined to remain the honoured and popular head of independent Belgium.

Two years before, the king was still complaining, and with reason, of a sort of depression or indifference in the upper classes. "What remains "to be desired for this country," he said, "is a "more robust national spirit, which exists indeed "in the people, but is feeble and partial amongst "the higher classes."[1] What a prodigious transformation in 1848!

Happy in being seconded at this great crisis by ministers who likewise possessed the confidence of the country, Leopold highly approved of the wise concessions which had been made on the political arena, and the energetic measures which had been taken, not only for coming to the assistance of material interests but also for

[1] King Leopold to Baron Nothomb, Minister-Plenipotentiary at Berlin, Ardennes, January 6, 1846.

assuring the defensive position of the territories. Although M. de Lamartine had made a declaration of a pacific character, and the French republic, issue of the revolution of February 24th, 1848, had been recognized by the government of King Leopold, foreign demagoguy had taken umbrage at the power the king derived from his growing popularity. Some hundreds of adventurers, with at least the tacit connivance of personages[2] at that time very powerful, came on the 30th of March and attacked the Belgian troops at the hamlet of *Risquons-Tout (Risk-all)*, near Mouscron, but they were received with cannon-shots, and soon dispersed. A little while afterwards Leopold was, on Palace Place, Brussels, the object of a really moving demonstration. A witness, who was on the king's staff, relates that everybody in turn came up to press the king's hand, at the risk of being crushed beneath the horses' hoofs, and that it was at least two hours before the king could re-enter the palace.

So remarkable an attitude on the part of

[2] *A Year of Revolution*, by Lord Normanby, French trans., vol. ii., p. 206.

Belgium during the great trial of 1848 awoke everywhere the most lively sympathy; and it may be said that the fame of Leopold spread rapidly from the date of this memorable epoch. "I have re-read," he said at a later period to a Belgian minister, "the political correspondence "of our envoys at this epoch of so much "agitation, and I have there found in every page "tokens of this sympathy. A letter from Berlin "goes thus: 'In respect of Belgium, all forms of "'admiration are exhausted.' About the same "time the Prussian government charged its "representative at Brussels to express the lively "satisfaction (the words are textually copied) it "experienced at Belgium's noble, firm, and truly "national attitude. 'We expected no less,' said "the ministers of Frederick William IV., 'from "'a people and a government to which treaties "'had guaranteed a nationality of which they in "'the hour of danger show themselves to be so "'worthy.' In another great court of Germany "a minister who played an important part wrote "to our diplomatic agent: 'You can sail calmly "'amidst storms, and I congratulate you upon "'it; it is not an easy matter. The political

" ' education of your people has been well
" ' managed.' Elsewhere, and nearer home, an
" illustrious statesman, in allusion to the defeat of
" the revolutionary bands which had invaded our
" territory, ejaculated: 'Of what immense im-
" ' portance was the success at Mouscron, not
" ' only to Belgium, but to all Europe!' In
" reporting this expression our envoy added:
" ' Everybody, from prince to simple citizen,
" ' congratulates Belgium on the attitude, full of
" ' calmness, dignity, and courage, which it was
" ' able to assume at this trying moment, on the
" ' wisdom of its king, on the fidelity of its
" ' populations, and on the valour of its troops.'
" The conduct of Belgium made a profound
" impression also at St. Petersburg. Sentiments
" of goodwill towards our country were expressed
" in a manner that was remarked. I have before
" me a despatch where the following passage
" occurs: 'Official letters arrived from St. Peters
" ' burg affirm positively that the disposition of
" ' the Emperor Nicholas has become excellent,
" ' and it is added that his Majesty would be
" ' inclined to establish regular diplomatic rela-
" ' tions between the two countries. . . .' The

" despatch from which this extract is taken bears " date May 11th, 1848. . . ."[3]

When Prince Metternich came to take refuge in Brussels during the storm of 1848-9, he was not less warm in his expressions of esteem and even admiration. "Had we known you better in " 1831," he said to an old diplomatist, "we would " have behaved better to you; but we regarded " you as an ungovernable set. The manner in " which Belgium behaves, with a constitution so " badly drawn up and almost impossible of " execution, a constitution which would be the " worst in Europe if that of Norway did not " exist, proves how easy the Belgians are to " govern." The connection which had been brought about in 1840 between King Leopold and Prince Metternich by the instrumentality of Count Munch, as well as early memories,[4] had drawn to Belgium the former Chancellor of Austria.

[3] Speech of M. H. de Brouckere, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chamber of Representatives, session of February 23, 1853. (*Parliamentary Annals*, session of 1852-3, p. 729.)

[4] The Prince's father, Count Metternich-Winneburg, had been Minister-Plenipotentiary in the Austrian Netherlands in 1791-2.

During this residence at Brussels the prince had pretty frequent indirect communication with King Leopold; though it is said for certain that he was not received more than twice at the palace. But it had become very difficult for the prince, in consequence of his great age, to make appointments for fixed days and hours; he preferred to communicate with the king through an intermediary or in writing.

The terrible, bloody days of June made a deep impression on King Leopold, but without shaking his confidence in the good sense and courage of the Belgian people. It shone out conspicuously when, during the anniversary fêtes of September, Leopold, with his queen and his children by his side, formally distributed colours to the reorganised Civic Guard. The troops presented arms, the drums beat, the cannon thundered, and the colours dipped before the king and royal family, standing on a stage erected against the palace-wall. Suddenly the king descended the grand staircase, and addressed the superior officers, grouped with their colours at the foot of the stage, in the following terms: "In addressing to you a few words I experience

" very lively emotion, but also very legitimate " pride. This fine country, abode of the earliest " civilisation, had for a long time hoped for an " existence—a national existence—for itself; but " alas! its hopes had been often deceived, and " the destinies of the country subordinated to " interests which were not its own. At last, " eighteen years ago, you succeeded in winning " that often-invoked existence. For the first " time you belonged to yourselves. Of this " independent existence you have made a noble " and patriotic use, and you have thus firmly " cemented it. In this situation you were sur- " prised by a political crisis without parallel in " history. As yet you have passed through it " gloriously; so gloriously that many a country " has adopted your political organisation as a " model, that your name is everywhere respected " and honoured, and that you must feel that it " deserves to be. Let us know how to maintain " this position; let us go on as we have gone " hitherto; and so shall we insure ourselves an " honourable name in history and a future full of " glory."

To the consolidation of the noble position

attained by Belgium Leopold henceforth devoted all his efforts and all his care. Believing still in the necessity of the union of parties, but labouring under an illusion, it would seem, as to the duration of such alliance, he applied himself to the task of removing as much as possible from the domain of politics every irritating question. He was far from sparing, with this view, of his advice and recommendations. One question, which was to excite, a few years later, tremendous feeling throughout the country, had even then begun to occupy the king's attention: it was that of charity. "One ought not," he wrote to his minister of justice, "to thwart the wishes of "public donors and benefactors without very "strong reasons."[5] To the minister of the interior he expounded his views about the imperative necessity of insuring productive work to the industries of the country and procuring outlets for them. "The question of the right of labour to "have work," he said, "has been agitated, and the "attention of the working population has been "drawn to the different theories advanced in

[5] King Leopold to M. De Haussy, Minister of Justice, Laeken, February 20, 1849.

" favour of labour. Without wishing to give an " opinion on this grave question I must, however, " say that, if there be any country where the " Government is called upon to come to the " assistance of labour, Belgium more than any " other is in that position. It cannot be by any " means made a reproach to her for it arises from " historical causes; but, according to my ideas, " the country has a right to say to the Govern- " ment: Our produce is good, and there are " markets where we may dispose of it to advan- " tage; but we cannot get to them by our own " efforts; help us to put ourselves into proximity " to these markets. . . ."[6]

An act of gratitude terminated this memorable period: on the 24th of September, 1849, the king decreed that a monument should be erected in the city of Brussels in commemoration of the National Congress, that illustrious assembly which had in 1831 determined the new destinies of the country.

The laying of the first stone of this monument of gratitude took place with due solemnity

[6] King Leopold to M. Rogier, Minister of the Interior, Laeken, May 23, 1849.

September 25, 1850. On arriving at the foot of the foundations of the projected column the king delivered a speech in which he rendered homage to an assembly memorable amongst all for its patriotism, enlightenment, and moderation; congratulated the country on having had faith in its liberal institutions, and declared that, for his part, the Government and himself had sought their support in the institutions and sympathetic feelings of the nation. "May the constitution," he added, "be transmitted intact to those who "shall come after us, and this twentieth anni- "versary will be the commencement for Belgium "of a new era of true greatness and of prosperity." The same evening, at the Palace of the Nation, he assembled together at a banquet the still surviving members of all the legislatures elected since 1830.

The queen was missed from this great national festival. Since February 24, 1848, her health had been sadly tried. Her fears for Louis Philip and her mother and brothers during the first days of the revolution; the suddenness of that terrible catastrophe; the spectacle of the royal family but lately seated in the palace of the Tuileries and now almost isolated in the mansion

at Claremont; and the recent death of Louis Philip — so many vicissitudes and so many sorrows had prostrated the noble lady.

Leopold, however, still deluded himself with respect to the queen; he was still possessed with the idea that she would survive him. Thus it was that in the preceding March he had pressed the Cabinet to lay forthwith before the Chambers a proposition of which the object was to put in regular order, so far as the jointure assigned to the queen was concerned, the marriage-articles of 1832. But the council were of opinion that to deal with the case provided for in the article appealed to would cause disquietude in the public mind. "Every Belgian Government," they said, "will always have at heart a desire to "see insured to the mother of our princes such "a maintenance as will be worthy of her and of "the country. But if the sympathies which "his majesty with so much reason inspires could "possibly become greater and be more unani- "mously manifested, it would be, above all, at "the time when the case provided for became a "reality."

As the health of Queen Louise did not im-

prove, the royal family had, on the 5th of September, removed permanently to Ostend, hoping much from the invigorating sea air. But the days of the august invalid were already numbered. The venerable Queen Mary Amelia, wishing to once more bless her child, arrived at the Palace of Ostend with the Duchess Augustus of Saxe-Coburg (Princess Clementina d'Orléans). The Duke de Nemours, Prince de Joinville, the Duke d'Aumale, the Duchess d'Orléans, and Duke Augustus of Saxe-Coburg also came over from Claremont and Twickenham.

On Friday, October 11, about four A.M., the struggle commenced. At ten minutes past eight Queen Louise passed away, with her hand in the king's, her mother at her side, her children, her brothers, and her sisters on their knees, weeping around the bed where, at the age of thirty-eight years and six months, had just expired one of the noblest women who ever sat upon a throne. "Her death, like her life," said King Leopold, "was holy."

In a last conversation with the king she had expressed a wish that her mortal remains should be deposited at Laeken, and this wish was re-

ligiously fulfilled. On the 14th of October, the funeral train, which bore away the queen's remains, left Ostend and slowly made its way towards Laeken, escorted by the multitudes who had flocked from the extremities of Flanders and Brabant. About four o'clock it arrived at its destination, and the coffin was taken down from the catafalque; behind walked the king between his two sons; then came the other princes; then the chief officers of state and the representatives of foreign powers; then, in silence, sorrow, and meditation, the crowd. For two days the queen's coffin lay uncovered in the modest little church at Laeken, which attracted more visitors than were ever seen in the most majestic cathedral. On the 17th, after a funeral service performed in the presence of the king and the royal family, the coffin was let down into a vault prepared beneath the altar of the Virgin.

This was but a provisional resting-place. The king had already resolved to erect, at his private expense, in the commune the queen had loved, a new church where her earthly tenement should be laid. Already, too, by a spontaneous movement, subscriptions had been opened with a view

of perpetuating by a monument the memory of the beneficent and popular queen. On the 24th of October delegates from the various provinces met in conference at Brussels and agreed that the amount of individual subscriptions should be applied to the construction of the new church at Laeken, which would thus become an evidence of the devoted love borne by the Belgian people towards Queen Louise.[7]

On the very day when this resolution was taken, a solemn service, at which all the authorities of the country except the king and the princes were present, was celebrated by the cardinal archbishop of Malines and six other prelates in the collegiate church of St. Michael and St. Gudule. After the Gospel had been read, the Rev. Father Dechamps, of the order of Redemptionists (now Archbishop of Malines), took his place in front of the high altar, to deliver the funeral oration of the Queen of the Belgians. "In vain, then," he said, "will our eyes still look for her—for that "gentle Majesty whom we have so often seen here

[7] On the 27th of May, 1854, was laid the first stone of this monument. The king, with his children, presided at the religious ceremony.

" humbly lost in the great assembly of all. Her " place here is void. . . . ." Nobly inspired by the general affliction, the reverend orator traced out in words of touching eloquence the holy life and holy death of the queen, and more than once his accents stirred the very hearts of his hearers. " . . . . It was the will of God," said he, " that " she should die at the extremity of the kingdom, " in order that, carried as it were in the arms of " the people across our provinces, she might leave, " as she passed, on the hearts of all the imprint " of her holy life and holy death. Let us never " forget that mourning procession, that funeral " car, that covered crown, that blaze of lights, " towards which turned every eye, passing " through those multitudes that flocked together " to kneel, to weep, and to pray, as it passed; " those priests and those pontiffs transmitting " one to another the sacred charge, with the " tears and benedictions of the church. Let us " never forget that moment full of sorrow and " sublimity when the king, surrounded by his " sons, by the princes of France and Germany, " by the representatives of foreign powers, by the " ministers, by the great officers of state, by the

" notabilities of the nation, and by a crowd,
" immense, innumerable, and silent as the tomb,
" bowed himself before the bier of the illustrious
" dead, and followed afoot, bareheaded, with the
" fashion of his countenance changed by grief,
" that triumphal car of death which was slackened
" in its progress as if from fear of arriving
" too soon at the grave which was a-digging, and
" at the moment for sobbing the last adieu. . . . ."
The king wrote next day to M. Dechamps, former minister of foreign affairs: " I beg you
" will express to your good brother all my grati-
" tude for his touching and excellent discourse
" of October 24. I had not strength or health
" to be present; but my children and I were
" affected to tears on reading it."[8] The venerable Queen Mary Amelia, for her part, addressed to the eloquent Redemptionist the following words, so firm and at the same time so touching: " I like to think as you do that my dearly-beloved
" has passed from this world into the hands of
" God, and I feel that she should be rather envied
" than mourned. But I am not strong enough

[8] King Leopold to M. Dechamps, Laeken, October 25, 1850.

" to entirely subdue my grief, and my soul is still " a prey to very deep and bitter sorrow. God " alone can help me to bear the cross he has been " pleased to lay upon me. . . . ." And she added: "It is a real honour to Belgium to have " produced so faithful and eloquent an interpreter " of her grief. . . . ."[9]

On the 25th of November Leopold received the grand deputation from the Senate, charged with the presentation of the address of condolence which that assembly had voted on the occasion of the queen's death. Next day, the Chamber of Representatives having come in a body to likewise present their address of condolence, he answered in a voice full of emotion: "From the " bottom of my heart I thank the Chamber of " Representatives for this address, wherein it ex- " presses in so touching, exalted, and tender a " manner its regret for the queen, and its feelings " towards me. The country has shared my sor- " row as if it had lost all I have lost myself. " I cannot tell you how this feeling on the part " of the country has touched me, and how deeply

[9] Queen Mary Amelia to the Rev. Father Dechamps, Claremont, November 5, 1850.

" grateful I am for it. You are right, gentlemen, " to speak of the queen as you do. She was " attached heart and soul to her new country; in " you she found to love those qualities which she " herself possessed in the highest degree—steadi- " ness and constancy in your affections. I look " to you, gentlemen, and to the country, its " happiness and progress, for the consolation I " have need of. The ideas I expressed even " before my arrival in Belgium with respect to " the future have been realized. The country " has lived, and has grown. It now offers to our " sight no longer the uncertain promise of in- " fancy, but the florid and robust health of youth. " All the most ardent desires of my heart are for " your future prosperity. My children, who will " be with you when I shall be so no more, will " continue my task, and your interests will be " their only thought. There will be between " them and you the same sympathy which exists " between *us*, gentlemen, and which every year " as it rolls away renders still stronger and still " deeper."

Subjoined is the correspondence on which the narrative in the chapter is based.

CORRESPONDENCE.

* *King Leopold to Lieutenant-General Baron Chazal, Minister of War.*[1]

"February 25, 1848.

". . . . I hope all that is passing at Paris will take a "more favourable turn, for at bottom no one wishes for a "revolution; but it is the inconceivable conduct of the "National Guard to which we are indebted for this formi- "dable crisis.

"Here, thank God, I do not quite see what more could be "desired; we are to such an extent *liberalised*, that, with the "exception of universal suffrage, I do not quite see what "could be done in the way of novelty. I have however "written this morning to Rogier, to beg him to keep an eye "on the agents of trouble that might be sent us from "Paris.

"LPLD."

[1] During more than twenty years King Leopold kept up a regular correspondence with General Chazal. We received permission to consult it, and chose such letters as would throw light on important events and make the sovereign's character better known.

Count Van der Duyn to M. de Capellen.

(Extract.)

"The Hague, March 3, 1848.

". . . . The news of a republican movement in Belgium " was at the least very premature. This little country seems, " on the contrary, contented, and strongly attached to its " young nationality: the government takes wise and able " measures to that end. Are you not struck as I am with " this fact, that it seems that the events of 1830, and the " separation then effected and so deeply deplored, becomes " under actual circumstances a sort of safeguard for the " government of the House of Orange, even here; for is it " not more than probable that if the kingdom of the " Netherlands of that day could have held together until " to-day, with the same ideas of government, called *conser-* " *vative*, the events of to-day would have upset *the whole* " *concern*, and far more seriously . . . ."

(*Biographical Notice and Recollections of Count Van der Duyn*, etc. Saint-Germain, 1852, p. 170.)

* *King Leopold to M. Rogier, Minister of the Interior.*

"Brussels, March 19, 1848.

" MY DEAR MINISTER,

" I have been told that there will be to-day a session of " the *Alliance* society, and a meeting of working men would " be organized. We are making the greatest efforts at the " present moment to support labour, *to preserve bread to those* " *who still have it.* A neighbouring country proves to us " that violence does not give work, and that disturbance of " credit and public fear destroy it completly. The *Alliance* " society is composed of warm patriots. Would it not be " possible to make them comprehend that they may work

" irremediable mischief if they excite the fears of quiet " populations ?

" I beg you to use all the efforts you shall find you can " to get it understood that our *first duty* is, at the present " juncture, to secure as far as possible the public welfare, and " to do nothing which by causing panic may threaten it.

" LEOPOLD."

* *King Leopold to M. Verhaegen, Vice-President of the Chamber of Representatives.*[2]

" Brussels, March 22, 1848.

" MY DEAR M. VERHAEGEN,

" You have given me so many proofs of good-will and " devotion, that I cannot refrain from expressing to you how " painfully affected I was by the terrible event which " plunges your family into mourning.[3]

" Alas! the four last weeks were calculated to trouble " the stoutest hearts, for all the foundations of political " society, as the experience of past ages laid them, seem " inclined to crumble away.

" Please express to your family all the share I have in " their sorrow, and believe in the very affectionate senti- " ments I feel towards you.

" LEOPOLD."

* *King Leopold to General Chazal.*

" Brussels, March 30, 1848.

" MY DEAR MINISTER,

" I am happy to see how well our troops behaved;[4] it " gives us the measure of what they now are.

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[2] M. Verhaegen, who was soon to become President of the Chamber of Representatives, was the real head of the liberals in Brussels.

[3] The allusion is to the death of M. Verhaegen's younger brother.

[4] At Risquons-Tout.

" I was a little alarmed to see that there were but 200 " men with the two guns; the Generals will really have to " be recommended to always *keep his artillery with him*, and " not to post it with detachments, for a dash might cause " him to lose it; that has sometimes happened, even in the " great wars. The general showed courage and devotion, " and rewards will certainly have to be conferred upon all " the officers and soldiers who distinguished themselves. " I hold over the promotions until we see what will come of " these bands, and also to have at hand ready means of " reward.

" LPLD."

* *Same to Same.*

" Laeken, May 20, 1848.

" MY DEAR MINISTER,

" Herewith a despatch from Prince de Ligne, which you " have perhaps already seen. It proves how right we were " to take precautions against those bands which, to a " certainty, would have attacked us if the dash of the 15th " had succeeded.[6] I call attention to practices of those " gentry who were present at the session of the 15th. It " appears they cherish certain amiable fancies; *very much* " *out of season*, it seems to me.

" LPLD."

* *Same to Same.*

" Laeken, February 25, 1849.

" MY DEAR GENERAL,

" I do not like to wait until to-morrow to offer you my " sincere congratulations on the manner quite worthy of you " in which you defended, and the superiority of heart and

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[5] General Fleury-Durey.

[6] The invasion of the Constituent Assembly, May 15, 1848.

" mind you displayed in defending the war-budget. For a " year past we have had a difficult task, but a glorious one " also. God knows what may be still in reserve for us, for " we have become of importance by our conduct and our " position, and every day gives me fresh proof of it; but " whatever may be the duty required of us, I am convinced " that you, my dear general, will contribute more than any " one else to the glory of the country, and to seeing that " its mission is honourably fulfilled.

" Ever with the same affectionate sentiments,

" LEOPOLD."

* *Same to Same.*

(Extract.)

" Laeken, March 15, 1849.

" . . . . I am naturally fearful of whatever might hurt " the ministry; the ties which bind me affectionately to it " are not such as are easily broken. Men cannot pass such " a year as that from February 24, 1848, to February 24, " 1849, together, united and confident, without cherishing " sentiments such as soldiers who have fought a good fight " against the enemy feel towards their comrades."

King Leopold to M. de Haussy, Minister of Justice.

" Laeken, February 20, 1849.

" MY DEAR MINISTER,

" It seems to me desirable to consider the course to be " followed in reference to acts of charity submitted for the " approbation of the government.

" Most countries very properly allow very great latitude " to charity, and with us, the feeling of the country and our " institutions sufficiently indicate the opportunity there is " for following this policy.

"In the first place, I think it desirable to leave these "questions as far as possible to be decided by the pro- "vincial authorities, and not to add together bequests left "to different localities.

"In the second place, no opposition ought to be made "to the wishes of public donors and benefactors, unless for "important reasons.

"The two countries where constitutional government is "best understood, England and the United States of "America, put no obstacle in the way of the donations and "charitable acts of individuals. The principle that a "person can bestow his bounties and gifts either on the "public or on individuals, as he pleases, alone appears to "me in harmony with the real liberty every one can claim "in such matters. It is evident, however, and it has "already been noticed by many persons, that if donors are "continually thwarted, an end will be put to charitable "actions, and the communes will thus find themselves "deprived of valuable resources, which were the result of "the most noble inspirations.

"LEOPOLD."

* *King Leopold to M. Rogier, Minister of the Interior.*

"Laeken, May 23, 1849.

"MY DEAR MINISTER,

"I have already several times communicated to the "Council my views on the imperative necessity of assuring "productive work to the industries of the country. The "Council of May 20 recognized once more the usefulness "of measures having this end in view, but mention was at "the same time made of difficulties these measures might "encounter in the Chambers.

"The question is very simple. The greater part of the "products of Belgian industry has no reason to fear foreign

" competition in the different markets; but, with the excep-
" tion of certain rich industries, it finds itself in a position
" of almost absolute inability to reach those markets in the
" absence of establishments in a large way of trade. The
" question of right to labour has been agitated, and the
" attention of the working population has been directed to
" the various theories put forward in favour of labour.

" Without wishing to deliver an opinion on this grave
" question, I must still say that, if there be any country
" where government is called upon to come to the as-
" sistance of labour, Belgium more than any other is in that
" position. She cannot be reproached with it; it is the
" effect of historical causes. But, as I think, the country
" has a *right* to say to its government: 'Our produce is
" 'good, and there are markets where we might dispose of
" 'it advantageously, but we cannot get to them *by our own*
" '*efforts;* help us to put ourselves within reach of these
" 'markets.'

" Would it be possible for the government to meet so
" reasonable a demand with a plea in bar? I think not.
" What renders the measure urgent is the probability that
" the European market will fall more and more into de-
" cadence, and, as there is need of time for distant enter-
" prises, labour might suddenly find itself in distress.

" If this want of work occurred, there is no doubt it would
" be obligatory to *give help* in the shape of subsidies. Pro-
" ductive work would cease: the working populations would
" no longer be able to live, unless by means of assistance; and
" habits of labour, valuable as they are for a country, would
" be lost, and would probably give place to social disorgan-
" isation."

" I think, then, the time has come when fresh delays
" would be inexcusable, and so much the more in that the

" sacrifices demanded of you are not out of proportion to " the advantages which may result therefrom; whilst the " system of assistance to which you will certainly be forced " to have recourse would be at least ten times as costly, and " that without profit, without return, and even with the " chance of becoming a source of evils to the county.

" I know you take my way of regarding this important " matter, and I recommend it warmly to your attention.

" LEOPOLD."

* *King Leopold to M. Rogier, Minister of the Interior.*

" Laeken, July 20, 1850.

" MY DEAR MINISTER,

" Experience teaches that in political matters, as in all " circumstances of life, it is wise to SEPARATE *difficulties*, " and so conquer them one by one. The retirement, so " regrettable and so unexpected, of General Chazal, im- " poses on us the duty of filling up his place: this for the " time is the only matter which must occupy our attention.

" The feeling, the tendency of the cabinet cannot be in " any way affected by this necessity of appointing a new " minister of war.

" Nearly a year ago we might have found ourselves in " the same position. My desire then is that attention be " given to only the object which the force of circumstances " imposes, without creating by discussion difficulties which " might interfere with the pleasant harmony which has " prevailed in the cabinet for nearly three years. It is " desirable also that the appointment should not be kept " too long in suspense, for otherwise it gives rise to in- " trigues. In this way all will be able to be soon arranged " to our general satisfaction.

" LEOPOLD."

* *King Leopold to M. A. Dechamps, Ex-Minister of Foreign Affairs.*

"Laeken, Oct. 25, 1850.

"MY DEAR M. DECHAMPS,

"For long, long years I have experienced from you "under all circumstances the most affectionate sentiments. "On the occasion of that terrible blow which has just fallen "upon me you have given me fresh proof of the same "sentiments, and you will be pleased to know how I appre- "ciate them, proceeding as they do from a heart so truly "good as yours. I take this opportunity also of begging "you to express to your estimable brother all my gratitude "for his touching and excellent sermon of October 24. I "wanted strength and health to be present, but my children "and I were moved to tears whilst reading it.

"Your estimable brother will hear not without satisfac- "tion that Queen Louise, who had desired to hear him at "St. Gudule, some time ago, was vividly affected by his "discourses. Seeing the affection I feel for you and for "your excellent brother, we often talked about him, and "the queen remarked to me that the discourses of Father "Dechamps made an impression upon her of the most "satisfactory kind; that it was so easy to perceive that "they were dictated by a good heart and sincere convic- "tion; and that it is only sincere and real conviction which "can also benefit the souls of others, and fortify them in all "their good aspirations.

"Please accept the expression of the affectionate senti- "ments I feel towards you.

"LEOPOLD."

M. J. Van Praet, Minister of the King's Household, to M. Dechamps.

" Brussels, Nov. 2, 1850.

" SIR,

" The king did not wait for the letter you addressed to " him to send you his acknowledgments and the expression " of all the sentiments your words aroused in him.

" The king thanks you for having accepted the task, " imposed upon you by your ability itself, of reproducing " before the eyes of the world virtues so gentle and perfec- " tions so exalted; he likewise thanks those who made " choice of you.

" Your eloquence, which is of so penetrating, finished, " and delicate a character, was better suited than any other " for a subject which admits of all that is most heartfelt and " tender in sorrow. You responded admirably, sir, to your " reputation, to the expectations and emotions of your " audience, and to the feelings buried in the bosom of the " king.

" Pray, sir, have the kindness to accept the assurance of " my most distinguished consideration.

" JULIUS VAN PRAET."

* *Queen Mary Amelia to the Rev. Father Dechamps.*

" Claremont, Nov. 5, 1850.

" I was deeply touched, reverend father, by the letter " you wrote to me, and I thank you for it with all my heart. " I like to think, as you do, that my dearly-loved daughter " has passed from this world into the arms of God, and I " feel that she is rather to be envied than mourned. But I " have not strength enough to entirely master my grief, and " my soul is still a prey to a very profound bitterness.

" God alone can help me to bear the cross he has laid

" upon me; and for that reason I ask all those who com-
" passionate my sufferings to give me the assistance of their
" prayers to Him.[7] I have great faith, reverend father, in
" the efficacy of yours, and I hope you will not refuse me
" them. For my children and myself I thank you for send-
" ing us your sermon. I shall only tell you in its praise
" that it made me cry a great deal. It is a real honour for
" Belgium to have found so faithful and eloquent an inter-
" preter of its grief. Receive, with my thanks, which I
" repeat, the assurance of my sentiments towards you.

" Yours very affectionately,

" MARY AMELIA."

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[7] Louis Philip had died at Claremont House on the 20th of August preceding, and the Queen of the Belgians had just followed him to the tomb.

CHAPTER V.

1850—1856.

LEOPOLD'S ANXIETY ABOUT BELGIUM—DISCOURAGEMENT OF THE ARMY—INCREASE OF THE ARMY—PRINCE LOUIS NAPOLEON BONAPARTE—THE STROKE OF STATE POLICY—COMMERCIAL TREATY WITH FRANCE—MARRIAGE OF THE DUKE DE BRABANT—GOOD UNDERSTANDING WITH THE EMPEROR NAPOLEON—THE CONGRESS OF PARIS—COUNT WALEWSKI'S COMPLAINT—THE ASSASSINATION LAW—FÊTES TO CELEBRATE THE TWENTY-FIFTH YEAR OF LEOPOLD'S REIGN—LEOPOLD'S GRATITUDE TO THE PEOPLE—CORRESPONDENCE.

THE King of the Belgians, feeling still far from easy about the state of Europe, wished to be in a position to confront all eventualities. Further, he disapproved of the economical ideas which seemed to predominate in the legislature, and which, in his opinion, tended to discourage and disorganise the army. On the 28th of September he imparted his apprehensions to the statesman

who had helped him to surmount the perils of 1831; he expressed himself in the following terms: "The future may still be very grave. " It is difficult to believe that all these complica- " tions will not be followed by more serious " struggles, by wars! Politicians who love " their country should not amuse themselves with " illusions about those possibilities, which are " probabilities. Nevertheless we see tendencies " towards easy-going security which there is " nothing to justify: there are ideas, purely " economical, which might result in the dis- " organisation of the country's means of de- " fence. . . ."[1]

The king's disquietude being redoubled at the approach of the discussion of the war-budget, he wrote to the chief of the Cabinet: "Belgium, " owing to its geographical position, is the most ex- " posed country on earth. Where other countries " have months for preparation, she has but days. " The fights of June, 1848, might have exposed " her to an immediate catastrophe; in February, " 1848, the peril was likewise great, but one

[1] King Leopold to M. Lebeau, Ostend, September 28, 1850.

" could expect a longer interior struggle.
" Belgium may be inundated, but if she be true
" to herself she has very fine chances for resis-
" tance and even of ulterior advantages; whilst,
" if she be invaded and occupied, she will have to
" bear from enemies and even friends the in-
" fliction of burthens enormous and ruinous, and,
" I must add, perfectly well deserved if they
" result from her own blindness. Another and
" very grave consideration is that concerning the
" spirit of the army. All countries without
" exception have turned their attention to raising
" the spirit and courage of those who were to be
" specially intrusted with the noble task of their
" defence. Belgium, on the contrary, not only
" does all she can to discourage her defenders in
" the present, but would declare for several suc-
" cessive years that the same course shall be
" pursued. The country offers our youth small
" choice of careers; there is only the army to
" appeal at all to the imagination. If you show
" a determination to close this career also, what
" think you is to become of our youth? I am
" quite impartial as to this grave question which
" may compromise the country's future: I have

" never made of the army, as it is made in many " other countries, a personal amusement, in spite " of the lively interest I take in military matters; " but in it I see, as M. Thiers said to me a few " months ago, the independence of Belgium: " without good means of defence, you will be the " sport of the whole world. . . ."[2]

A month afterwards, harassed by a serious ministerial incident, he said again, whilst earnestly intreating the chief of the Cabinet to take provisionally the portfolio of war: "Without " national security there is no political existence; " all the most precious interests, without any " exception, are bound up with this security: " the strongest guarantees, therefore, must be " given to the country and to the army that we " will defend the elements of this security as our " most valuable treasure. This charge I commit " to your courageous and devoted hands; it is, I " know, a laborious and difficult task, but you " will defend our greatest national interest."[3]

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[2] King Leopold to M. Rogier, Minister of the Interior, Ardennes, December 20, 1850.

[3] King Leopold to M. Rogier, Minister of the Interior, Brussels, January 21, 1851.

Leopold followed with increasing attention the various phases of the struggle between the Legislative Assembly and Prince Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, the three years' president of the French Republic. As early as 1850 he felt a certainty that the president would emerge from this difficult position. He was not, therefore, over-surprised by the stroke of state policy which, on December 2, 1851, caused the dictatorship to pass into the hands of Prince Louis Napoleon. But the consequences to Europe of this great event who could tell? Belgium, above all, could not but be deeply concerned in the change which had just been accomplished in France. All relations with the dictator's government had been broken off: not a Belgian journal had been permitted to pass the frontier; and at Brussels there was no positive information about the position of Paris.

In this serious and peculiar conjuncture the king had recourse to one of the most distinguished statesmen in Belgium. M. H. de Brouckere was making his arrangements for returning to Turin, to which court he had been accredited as minister plenipotentiary; but at the king's request he

started for Paris, so soon as the boom of cannon had ceased, with semi-official instructions, to see M. de Morny, with whom he had been acquainted, and to get enlightened as to the sentiments and intentions of the French government with respect to Belgium. This delicate mission was completed with the greatest success. Leopold's confidant arrived at Paris December 8th, and next day saw M. de Morny, to whom he said that the King of the Belgians had always kept up good and neighbourly relations with the president, and had never had reason to regret it. "The king under-
" stands," he added, "our system of liberty and
" hospitality not to mean that a man may stand
" in our garden to throw bombs into our neigh-
" bour's, or that we should tolerate from one who
" formerly belonged to the monarchical party
" what would be prevented in the case of a born
" revolutionist. We have our system, but it is
" for home use." This conversation, which was further prolonged, made a great impression upon M. de Morny, and left a very good effect; by establishing confidence it served as a point of departure for other communications. M. Brouckere had also seen Prince Lucien Murat, his

colleague at Turin, and Marshal Magnan, who were useful in lending their assistance.

At the formal reception on New Year's Day, 1852, Leopold spoke the following wise and reassuring words: "Belgium possesses institutions "bearing the imprint of a great spirit of liberty; "she has always made a wise use of them, and "never carried the application of them to excess. "We are entering upon a new era. I have "no doubt the same prudence and the same "good feeling will guide Belgium aright, and "enable her to surmount any difficulties which "might supervene. She will maintain the dis-"tinguished position she occupies amongst the "nations of Europe." Whilst notifying to King Leopold the vote declared by the French people on the 20th and 21st of December, 1851, the President of the Republic expressed, for his own part, a formal intention of maintaining peace abroad, and of drawing still closer the bonds of friendship between France and Belgium.

The triumph gained by Prince Louis Napoléon was unfortunately the signal for a reaction which did not spare Belgium. It first weakened and ultimately overthrew the Liberal Cabinet, which

having taken office six months before the revolution of February, had boldly and wisely steered the ship of state past all the breakers of a period more tumultuous sometimes than ocean itself. Deadly foes of Liberalism embittered the difficulties which existed between the Belgian ministry and the French government touching the renewal of the commercial treaty of December 13, 1845. In their opposition to the chief members of the cabinet they traded upon the fears of the manufacturing and agricultural populations; and succeeded at last in undermining and dismembering that celebrated administration, which dated from August 12, 1847. M. Frère Orban, a powerful orator and more than average administrator, whose reputation as finance minister was not confined to Belgium, withdrew on the 17th of September, 1852, and, a few days afterwards, M. Rogier and the rest of his colleagues, being beaten in a ballot of the Chamber of Representatives, also resigned the power of which they had valiantly borne the heavy responsibility during the most stormy days of their epoch.

King Leopold then made an appeal to the devotion of M. H. de Brouckere. He belonged

to the Liberal party, and had faithfully served in the National Congress and during the subsequent legislatures. But his remoteness from the country during the latest struggles gave him a peculiar position. Negotiations about the formation of a new ministry were, however, very laborious. The king even complained of the difficulties occasioned by the personal ambition of certain members of the Chamber; and, for sheer peace and quietness, displayed a desire to see introduced into Belgium the system of the United States, which the Dutch seemed disposed to transplant to their own soil, and in accordance with which ministers cannot be or remain members of parliament. At last, to the king's great satisfaction, M. H. de Brouckere succeeded in his business; he formed a ministry of conciliation, the principal support of which, however, was to be looked for amongst the "left."

The hopes of this shrewd and sagacious statesman were not deceived. On the 9th of December, the French government consented to again put in force, commencing from January 15, 1853, and until the conclusion of a definitive treaty, the commercial convention of Decem-

ber 13, 1845. On the 20th the king promulgated the law referring to the repression of offences committed by the press against the heads of foreign governments. In the spring of the following year, that is on the 9th of April, 1853, the Duke de Brabant attained his eighteenth year, the age fixed by the constitution for the majority and admission to the Senate of the heir-apparent to the throne. This event was celebrated throughout Belgium with a joy in which all parties shared. Some time afterwards the legislature came to a decided resolution respecting the organization of the army, that capital question which had given rise to such warm and frequent debates, which had caused King Leopold so much anxiety, and which he placed foremost as involving the very existence of the country. A grand commission, composed partly of field-officers and partly of representatives, had been intrusted with the duty of studying all the details which were connected with the defence of Belgium; and the result of its labours was that it proposed an army of 100,000 men, including the reserve. "With less," said King Leopold, "it would be impossible in case of

"danger to take the field." The cabinet threw the proposition into the shape of a bill, and M. Renard, then a colonel on the staff, having been appointed government delegate to defend the bill, the king gave him instructions, amongst which the following passage attracted notice: "The "first, the most important of all the arguments, "is this:—there is a pretty general impression in "Europe that it is easy to get possession of "Belgium at very short notice. In this impres- "sion there lurks a great peril for the country, "and the first and most sacred duty of all who "are interested in her existence is to destroy it, "and substitute for it the opinion that Belgium "may be invaded, indeed, as all countries may, "but cannot be conquered without immense "sacrifice. The result of this opinion will be "(what after all we should most desire) that it "will be said: Belgium is too difficult to take; "better leave it alone."[4] In the two Chambers the propositions of the government were adopted by a considerable majority.[5]

[4] *Parliamentary Annals* of 1867, 1868 (Senate), p. 143.

[5] King Leopold, who identified himself with the military honour of Belgium, was deeply wounded by the imputations which Lord Derby, on the strength of false versions and

The result rejoiced the heart of King Leopold, who was at the time at Vienna with the Duke de Brabant. "Since 1848," he wrote, "Belgium has "passed no act which does her more honour and "which will be better appreciated abroad." The Duke de Brabant felt no less satisfaction. "The constitutional system," said the Archduke Charles Louis to him, "has elsewhere shown that "it brings monarchies down to republics." "It "has proved in our case," answered the Duke de Brabant, "that it could resist republican attrac- "tion. This constitutional system may be in- "applicable to Austria; but it has been made "apparent that it suits Belgium, and that by "joining the power of public opinion to that of "the crown it lends the latter salutary support. "The King of the Belgians by raising, himself "alone, his army to 100,000 men, would not

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erroneous traditions, threw, in December, 1854, upon the conduct of the Belgian troops at Waterloo. It will, therefore, not surprise any one to be told that he desired a refutation of them, and that his indignation caused the appearance of a notable work entitled *Reply to English reflections on the conduct of the Belgian troops in* 1815, by a general officer (Brussels, 1855, 8vo.). This general officer was the eloquent defender of the organisation bill of 1853.

" have produced the same effect in favour of the " maintenance of the independence of his king- " dom as is produced by associating with the " measure his people as well, thus giving it the " sanction of the national will."

King Leopold and the Duke de Brabant had received during their travels, and especially at Vienna, a welcome which bore witness to the profound esteem which Belgium had won in Germany, as elsewhere. On the 17th of May, the king announced to his Minister of Foreign Affairs the approaching marriage of the Duke de Brabant with the young Archduchess Mary Henrietta, daughter of Archduke Joseph of Austria, Palatine of Hungary. " I have asked," he said, " of H. M. the Emperor of Austria the " hand of the Archduchess Mary for my son " the Duke de Brabant, and I have seen with " pleasure that the request was entertained in the " kindest and most gracious manner by the " emperor and all the imperial family. The " marriage might take place, please God, towards " the end of August."[6]

[6] King Leopold to M. H. de Brouckere, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Vienna, May 17, 1853.

The king's desire was to be fulfilled. The marriage of the heir to the throne with the Archduchess Mary was celebrated at Brussels on the 22nd of August. "This union," said the Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Senate and to the Chamber of Representatives, "crowns the wishes and "assures the happiness of a prince of whom "Belgium is justly proud; and it at the same "time satisfies the most important political re-"quirements. It will be a pledge of happiness "for the dynasty, as it is already of security "for the country. The latter, indeed, sees itself "connected by a new tie with an ancient "monarchy essentially interested in consolidating "the peace of the world, and in maintaining, in "concert with the other powers, the treaties "which sanctioned the independence of Bel-"gium."

But even now fearful complications were threatening Europe and the East. On the 30th of November, 1850, the Turkish fleet at Sinope had been destroyed by the Russians, who would probably have entered Constantinople in triumph, had not the naval forces of England and France, stationed at Besika, barred their way.

The Czar Nicholas, nevertheless, still believed that France, wherein the empire had been re-established by Napoleon III., on the 2nd of December, 1852, and England, still distrustful, would not remain long united to stop him. A rumour even was spread abroad that during his last visit to London, and in consequence of a hint from St. Petersburg, the King of the Belgians had tried to dissolve the alliance between France and England, and that he had succeeded, through his great influence, in getting an exalted personage to second his efforts. It was true that King Leopold had established with Russia the official relations which had been suspended and put off by the court of St. Petersburg since the admission into the Belgian army, in 1838, of General Skryznecki; but this establishment of regular relations between the two governments had not exercised any influence over King Leopold's dispositions in respect of the Anglo-French alliance. A former minister of France at Brussels solemnly affirmed that from the accession of Napoleon III., King Leopold was always the most strenuous and zealous instrument in maintaining the peace of the world and the good

understanding between England and France.[7] Yes, King Leopold, looking above all at the interests of Belgium, laboured incessantly and assiduously for the maintenance of the peace of the world. He had therefore, from the first, been opposed to the Eastern war, taking care, however, not to give occasion for fresh complications to arise.

Just when the invasion of the Danubian principalities might have produced a general conflagration, King Leopold expressed a desire to see grow up between the two courts of the Tuileries and of Brussels a state of things which might permit them to be on the same friendly terms as the two countries. In replying to this advance, the Emperor of the French gave Prince Napoleon full power to appear at Brussels as the mouthpiece of the same sentiments on his part. The prince arrived at the court of King Leopold January 30, 1854, and stayed there until February 3. In calling attention to this journey in a letter to the representative of the French empire at the courts of the King of Saxony and the Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, the French Mi-

[7] This declaration was made to the Senate of the French Empire by M. Barrot (Session of February 9, 1866).

nister of Foreign Affairs[8] wrote: "The Emperor, "by sending a prince of his family on a visit at "Brussels to a sovereign who by his position and "his age is the real head of the Coburgs, does "himself the pleasure of showing that there is not "a member of that illustrious family whom he "does not believe to be animated towards him "by the most honourable feelings." Leopold on his side wrote word to a statesman who had his full confidence (February 18): "What has "passed in England from the month of January "could not but influence our policy; we could "not have borne to be represented as an obstacle "to English policy. My part is, as it has been "since 1831, very simple; I put the ship through "the manœuvre necessary for its preservation; "close upon twenty-three years of navigation "give some title to confidence."[9]

On the 27th of February M. H. de Brouckere and M. Barrot signed a definitive treaty destined to take the place of the commercial convention of December 13, 1845, and in ex-

[8] M. Drouyn de Lhuys.

[9] King Leopold to Baron Nothomb, Minister Plenipotentiary at Berlin, Laeken, February 18, 1854.

change for advantages conceded to coal, castings, and iron-work, Belgium gave up the pirating of French books.

Some days before the landing at Kamiesch in the Crimea of the armies of France and England, an interview took place between the Emperor Napoleon III. and King Leopold. As the emperor was then at the camp of Boulogne, the king expressed a wish that the meeting should take place at Calais; but the emperor sent an aide-de-camp to Brussels, to request that the interview should take place at Boulogne itself. On the 2nd of September the king, accompanied by the Duke de Brabant, started from Ostend and arrived the same day at Calais, where the emperor awaited them on board the Queen Hortensia corvette, which took them to Boulogne. On the 4th of September they returned to Brussels. It was after this interview that Napoleon III. had his wish conveyed to the king to have the king's portrait to place in his own room. He had remembered to have heard his mother Queen Hortensia speak to him of King Leopold as one who had shown much concern for her in times of difficulty.

This journey to Boulogne had been decided

upon without the cognisance of the ministry. It was the subject of strong comment. As the camp at Boulogne contained troops destined for the campaign in the Crimea, the Cabinet was apprehensive that the presence of the King of the Belgians in the midst of the French soldiers might give rise to erroneous interpretations at a time when the Minister of Foreign Affairs was trying above all things to preserve the neutrality of the country from any attaint. The Cabinet had even determined to resign, when a compromise came to prevent this ministerial crisis. The king left for Calais, after promising to abstain from taking part in any review of French troops.

Meanwhile the elections of 1854 had modified the parliamentary situation by increasing the strength of the Conservatives. Now the chief of the Cabinet had declared that he would give up his place to others the moment a majority was obtained either on the benches of the "left" or of the "right." He kept his word March 2nd, 1855. On the 30th, M. de Decker formed a new administration taken from the "right centre," *i.e.*, from amongst the moderate Catholics and the

Progressives. King Leopold had a high respect for M. de Decker and his strongly pronounced unionist convictions. Besides, he considered him as the special representative of the Flemings, and indeed as the only really Flemish minister who had sat at his council; and, in the eyes of the king, Flanders was the heart of Belgium.

Whilst our fatherland, thanks to its happy neutrality, was tranquilly devoting itself to the labours of peace, the Crimea was the scene of a gigantic and deadly struggle. At last Sebastopol succumbed, the roar of cannon ceased, and a congress was opened at Paris. King Leopold repaired to London, where he remained from the 15th to the 30th of March, 1856. At the session of April 8, the president of the Paris Congress (Count Walewski) expressed an idea that the press of Belgium, by its violence, had endangered the relations of that country with France. "But the press of which he complained," said Lord Clarendon, subsequently, "was not that "which, established and managed by Belgian "subjects, was busy only with their national "interests. He had in his eye journals published "in Belgium by French exiles, which were

" distributed clandestinely in France, and preached " amongst the lower classes and the troops of the " latter country not only revolution but the assas- " sination of the emperor." When the protocol of this session, whereat the other plenipotentiaries had joined in the indignation displayed by Count Walewski, became known at Brussels, the national representative body experienced a lively emotion. On a question being put by one of the most distinguished members of the opposition,[10] the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Count C. Vilain XIV., answered energetically: "There is a desire to " know whether one of the governments repre- " sented at the congress has demanded of the " Belgian government any modification of the " constitution? None. The honourable member, " M. Orts, asks me whether the cabinet, in case " such a demand were made, would be disposed " to propose to the Chamber any change in the " constitution? Never."

But just concession had already been made to France.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs had an-

[10] M. Orts.

nounced, at the session of June 1, 1855, that at the opening of the next session, in order to remove any kind of doubt about the meaning of the law of 1833 relating to extra-tradition, he would present to the Chambers a bill which would assimilate assassination of a foreign sovereign to the assassination of any other person. This undertaking, of which the king appreciated the necessity and importance, was kept. M. A. Nothomb, minister of justice, proposed an additional article to the law of 1833. "The cir- "cumstances," he has since said,[11] "were serious "and difficult. Moral satisfaction had to be "given to a neighbouring country, to a powerful "government which made bitter complaints, and "which raised against us emphatic demands." Although the various fractions of the Chamber were at one in approving of the principle of the new law, the law gave rise to warm discussions. The Liberals, being very hostile to the Minister of Justice, seized with alacrity on the opportunity for making war upon him. Nevertheless the law was voted by great majorities both in the

[11] *Parliamentary Annals* (1868), p. 775.

Chamber and in the Senate. The king, upon sanctioning it on the 22nd of March, praised the talent and firmness of which the minister had given proof on this occasion.[12]

In the month of June attention was drawn to the visit paid to the Court of Brussels by Archduke Maximilian, brother of the Emperor of Austria. Some weeks later the king, accompanied this time by the Count de Flandre and Princess Charlotte, returned to England. He was back in Brussels on July 10, almost on the eve of the splendid fêtes which were to celebrate the twenty-fifth year of his reign.[13]

They were wonderful days, those days when the royalty of Belgium obtained an unexampled triumph, when all Europe showered applause on the sovereign who was about to be installed, as it were, a second time and with the same confidence in the future by the very same who had in 1831 decreed to him the crown, and who after twenty-five years felicitated themselves on what they

[12] King Leopold to M. A. Nothomb, Minister of Justice, Laeken, April 10, 1856.

[13] M. de Decker, chief of the cabinet and Minister of the Interior, took, through the medium of the Legislative Chamber, the initiative in these national fêtes.

had done! Such fêtes are not seen once a century.

On the 21st of July, 1856, Leopold I., having on either side the Duke de Brabant and the Count de Flandre, and accompanied by a brilliant staff, advanced on horseback, through the surging masses of the people who shook the air with their shouts, towards the triumphal arch, where he was awaited by the burgomaster of Brussels, followed by the aldermen and common councilmen. At this same spot the keys of the capital of the new kingdom had been presented to him five-and-twenty years before. After replying in a voice full of emotion to the patriotic address of the burgomaster, Leopold entered Brussels, to traverse the triumphal course he had followed in 1831. The popular joy was deep and loud; and a radiant sun illumined, as it had twenty-five years before, the grandeur of the spectacle. At one o'clock Leopold arrived at the spot where, on the 21st of July, 1831, he had taken the constitutional oath. There, on the steps of St. James's church, he was awaited by the surviving members of the congress which had elected him king, and at their head M. de Gerlache, former president of

that famous assembly, the very same who, after administering the oath to Prince Leopold, had said to him, "Sir, ascend the throne." On nearing this noble band of patriots, the king could not conceal his emotion. He uncovered, and all the spectators followed his example, whilst the cheers were hushed for a moment, for all wished to hear the words which the president of the congress of 1831 was about to address to the sovereign who had succeeded in consolidating Belgian independence. The eloquent spokesman of his old colleagues expressed himself in the following terms:

"Sir, twenty-five years ago, in this very place, "on this very day, the Belgian congress, in the "name of the nation, took of your Majesty the "oath 'to observe the constitution and the laws "'of the Belgian people, and to maintain the "'national independence.' They who were "then witnesses of this solemn undertaking "come hither to-day to affirm, in the face of "heaven, that your Majesty has performed all "those promises and surpassed all our hopes. "And the nation, one and all, sir, comes hither "to join in our affirmation. It comes to bear

" witness that, during these twenty-five years of " sovereignty, its king has never violated a single " one of its laws, lifted a finger against a single " one of its liberties, or given legitimate cause of " complaint to a single one of its fellow-citizens. " Here, all dissensions disappear; here, we are all " of one accord, we have all but one and the " same heart in which to enshrine one common " love for our king and our fatherland!

" Amidst the commotions which have shaken " so many governments, Belgium has remained " faithful to her prince and the institutions she " created for herself. This sort of phenomenon, ' rare as it is in our age, can be explained only " by the happy harmony existing between king " and people, cemented by their common respect " for sworn faith and for the national constitu- " tion. A constitution which satisfies a people " greedy of liberty, and so deeply in love with it " as to bear it with all its inevitable incon- " veniences; an intelligent, religious, and moral " people, who, remembering the past, ask only " that they may live in peace under the protection " of their own laws; a prince, so wise, so able, so " full of conciliation, that amidst divergence of

" opinion he has been able to win the esteem and " respect of all, both in Belgium and abroad— " such, sir, is the concurrence of providential " circumstances which has preserved and con- " solidated this new state, and which has rendered " it peaceful, prosperous, and we dare to hope " (and it is our dearest wish) stable for ever and " ever!

" History, sir, some day, after recalling our " ancient national glories, will have some brilliant " pages to dedicate to the foundation of this " kingdom and to the reign of Leopold I., a " reign so much the more fertile in instruction, in " that God, whilst visibly protecting Belgium, " has not spared her her days of trial.

" It is for history to recall to mind, what we " may be barely permitted to allude to here; it is " for history to speak of the impetus given to " mental activity in all careers, science, arts, and " literature; and of the rapid development of " industry which has caused a transformation, so " to speak, in this nation whose restoration to " itself dates scarcely a quarter of a century " back.

" Sir, the members of the National Congress

" are deeply moved and touched by the delicate " and kindly feeling which has brought you " again to this very spot where we received your " Majesty so long ago, in the midst of that old " band of ardent, devoted, and courageous " patriots who laid the first foundations of our " social fabric, who made Belgium what we see it, " and who instituted the assemblies and the " powers which govern it.

" Your presence here, sir, recalls to us the " memory of that great day of July, 1831, to " which no demonstration could do justice, when " hearts overflowing with joy and hope hailed in " Leopold I. the dawning of a new Belgium, at " last awakened after two long centuries of " slumbering under the dominion of the foreigner. " The same acclamations await him to-day in " every one of our towns, for the idea of this " festival is entirely popular; yes, indeed, sir, it is " the voice of the whole people who feel the need " of expressing their gratitude to him, who, " under God, has most contributed to render " them happy.

" It only remains for us now, sir, to give " thanks in the country's name to Heaven,

" praying at the same time for a prolongation for " years to come of your Majesty's precious life " and glorious reign, that you may more and " more assure our country's future, and serve as " counsellor, example, and guide to those young " princes, genuine children of Belgium, who will " be one day called upon to continue the wise " and noble traditions of the great reign of " Leopold I."

Leopold, whose eyes were moist with emotion, respectfully pointed out to his sons the founders of Belgian liberty; then, having conquered his feelings, he covered his head, and replied to the members of the immortal congress: " Gentlemen, " I cannot leave you without expressing to you " how greatly I have ever appreciated the labours " of the National Congress. This illustrious " assembly abundantly represented the nation, " all its feelings, and all its interests. It was " surrounded not only by difficulties but by " actual dangers; and, in spite of all, it never " tripped. It understood what was required to " make the country happy. It never suffered " itself to be turned aside by any intrigue, by any " threat. You, gentlemen, laid the foundation

" of a work which we are carrying out to com-
" pletion, and you gave the country the courage
" needed to carry the work to a successful issue.
" And for this I cherish in my heart of hearts a
" feeling of the liveliest gratitude, and, I repeat,
" I have ever appreciated the wisdom and talent
" of this assembly, numerous as it was, which
" gave Europe a beautiful example, which, I
" dare to say, has not been much followed.
" I thank you, Mr. President, for the sentiments
" you have just expressed to me in the name of
" the members of the congress. It is a happiness
" to me, gentlemen, to see so many of you still
" after so many years."

On leaving the Place Royale, Leopold dismounted at the palace, where he received the reigning Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, Prince George of Saxony, and Lord Westmoreland, ambassador extraordinary of the Queen of England, and all these then joined the procession, which proceeded to the new quarter named after Leopold. There, on a spot decorated with extraordinary magnificence, all the authorities of the country and the deputations from the communes had met to pay their compliments to their

sovereign. There he received the addresses of the Senate and the Chamber of Representatives, and read a speech which the chief of the cabinet had submitted for his approbation. In it Leopold, at the inspiration of his ministers, made an earnest appeal for union. "As for the past," he said, "it is union that gave us strength, in the days of "triumph for our nationality, as well as in the "days of trial wherein it gained fresh vigour. "As for the future, still in union resides the "secret of our prosperity, our greatness, and our "durability." The king, standing and uncovered, then listened to the *Te Deum*, intoned by the cardinal-archbishop of Malines, assisted by the other Belgian prelates.[14]

The jubilee lasted three days at Brussels, and was then continued in the chief towns of the provinces, which Leopold with the royal family visited in succession. These extraordinary solemnities were described in all the journals of

[14] A detailed account of these imposing solemnities will be found in the collection entitled *The Fêtes of July*, a report, with engravings, of the public solemnities and ceremonies celebrated at Brussels, July 21, 22, and 23, 1856, by Louis Hymans.

Europe, and everywhere made a vast and a salutary impression. "Yes," said the *Universal Monitor*, "Europe has sincerely applauded these "congratulations which the Belgian people and "king exchanged. . . . . The Belgian people has "shown a noble gratitude, and has set an example, "very rare in the history of mankind, by render- "ing to its sovereign in his lifetime that justice "which in nearly every case the gratitude of "peoples accords to kings only after their "death. . . . ."[15]

On the 15th of September Leopold addressed to the nation a manifesto in which he expressed his deep gratitude. "I should have "liked," he said, "to visit the humblest com- "munes, to see myself surrounded there by those "faithful populations which constitute not the

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[15] It was then also that M. De Laguerronière wrote a remarkable political notice of Leopold I. See *Contemporary Political Studies and Portraits* (Paris, 1856, 8vo.), pp. 139-176.

Shakespeare, who has been called a "clayver man," makes Mark Antony say,—

> "The *evil* that men do lives after them ;
> The good is oft interred with their bones:
> Thus let it be with Cæsar." *Transl.*

" least important portion of the country, to the " happiness of which I have dedicated a life of " solicitude and devotion. I am happy to be " able, through the instrumentality of the com- " munal administrations, to convey to the Belgian " people in their entirety, the genuine expression " of the gratitude with which my heart is filled at " the sight of so much affection and so much " confidence."

This confidence stimulated the king. In opening his heart in private he loved to point to this rare and beautiful spectacle of a grateful country after a reign already so long. He hoped, by God's help (he said), to still remain her pilot.

Subjoined is the collateral correspondence, etc.

CORRESPONDENCE.

* *King Leopold to M. J. Lebeau, Member of the Chamber of Representatives.*

"Ostend, September 28, 1850.

"MY DEAR M. LEBEAU,

"I hoped that the banquet of the 25th would give "me an opportunity of conversing with you; but I did "not succeed then, and so I take the course of writing you "a few words.

"The twentieth anniversary of the days of September, "after so many perils and difficulties overcome, has in it "something which appeals to the heart, and I felt the need "of recalling to your mind the past, and so proving to you "that the recollection of your affectionate devotion and "faithful courage in the midst of the dangers which "menaced, and were even overwhelming us, *has remained* "*graven on my memory.* The future may become very "black again; it is scarcely possible that these complica- "tions should not be followed by more serious struggles, "by wars. Politicians who love their country must not "amuse themselves with illusions about these possibili- "ties, which are probabilities; nevertheless we see ten- "dencies towards sinking into a security which there is

" nothing to justify: there are ideas of a purely economical " character, which might result in the disorganisation of " the country's means of defence.

" This astonishes me the more, as the least invasion of " the country by foreign forces would cost it hundreds of " millions; *but, what is still more precious, it might cost it* " *its* POLITICAL EXISTENCE; for to believe that, if it were once " occupied by foreign forces, these forces would evacuate it, " would be slipping wantonly into very strange illusions.

" The meeting of the Chambers is not far off; and it is " therefore necessary to pay serious attention to the pre- " vention of an evil of which the results would be disastrous: " 1831 must not be forgotten! A country could not *twice* " expose itself to equal danger *without perishing.*

" Be good enough to use your experience and enlightened " patriotism to second me in the defence of the principles " on which the existence of the country must always rest, " and be good enough to believe in the affectionate senti- " ments I shall never cease to feel towards you.

" LEOPOLD."

* *King Leopold to M. Rogier, Minister of the Interior.*

" Laeken, August 28, 1851.

" Accept my most sincere thanks for the affectionate " sentiments which your kind letter expresses towards me " in the name of your colleagues and yourself. The blow " which has just fallen upon me deprives me of a very dear " brother, and a faithful and honest friend.[1]

" Belgium loses in him a friend and well-wisher. He " came here with my mother in the early part of September,

[1] His Highness Ferdinand Prince of Saxe-Coburg, died August 27, 1851.

" 1831; he traversed all the country with me, and he was " very sincerely attached to Belgium.

" We have known one another now, my dear minister, " for long, long years, and you have always testified towards " me an affection of which I have been very sensible; pre- " serve towards me those sentiments, and count surely upon " mine.

" LEOPOLD."

* *King Leopold to M. Rogier, Minister of the Interior.*

" Brussels, January 21, 1851.

" MY DEAR MINISTER,

" The circumstances in which we find ourselves point to " but one solution of the ministerial difficulty, which is, that " you should take charge in the interim of the portfolio of war. " You know what my confidence in you is, and I am per- " suaded that the feeling of the country is in that respect the " same. *Without national security there is no political existence;* " all the most valuable interests, without any exception, are " bound up with that security. The strongest guarantees " must, therefore, be given to the country and the army, *that* " *we will defend the elements of this security*, as our most pre- " cious treasure. I leave this trust in your courageous and " devoted hands; the task, as I know, is laborious and diffi- " cult, but you will defend the most *important national interest.*

" I have sufficient faith in your devotion and character " to lay upon you the accomplishment *of a duty sacred to* " *us all*, and I beg you to undertake it, whilst assuring you " of my most sincerely affectionate sentiments.

" LEOPOLD."

* *King Leopold to General Chazal.*

"Laeken, October 18, 1852,
"Last day of the battle of Leipzig.

(Extract.)

". . . . We must do everything to please the army, and "give reasonable promotion to officers, and to prevent the "fate of the army from being constantly made a question. "This is certainly a favourable moment for that. . . . ."

* *King Leopold to M. Henry de Brouckere, Minister of Foreign Affairs.*

"Vienna, May 17, 1853.

"MY DEAR MINISTER,

"You with the Cabinet have obtained a triumph which "must make you very happy, and which is for me a source "of the greatest satisfaction. You have gained a parlia- "mentary battle which will contribute essentially to the "security of the independence of Belgium, and which has "produced an immense and very salutary impression abroad. "Since 1848 Belgium has passed no bill which does her "more honour, and which will be better appreciated abroad.

"I lose no time in communicating to you an event which "will, I believe, give sincere satisfaction to the country and "the Cabinet.

"I have requested of the Emperor of Austria the hand "of the Archduchess Mary for my son the Duke de Brabant, "and I have seen with pleasure that the request was received "in the most affectionate and kindly manner by the Emperor "and all the Imperial family.

"The marriage might take place, please God, towards "the end of August.

"Please thank your colleagues in my name. The

"Cabinet knows the affection I feel for it, and which it "has so well justified, and you personally have managed "this affair with the greatest zeal and the greatest ability. "Please believe that I appreciate it. With the most sin- "cerely affectionate sentiments,

"LEOPOLD."

* *King Leopold to Baron Nothomb, Minister Plenipotentiary of Belgium at Berlin.*

(Extract.)

"Laeken, February 18, 1854.

"MY DEAR MINISTER,

"... We find ourselves at a very dangerous crisis. "If France remains faithful to her present policy, and the "two great German powers understand their pretty plainly "indicated mission, there is hope of escape from these "complications.

"It is important that I should be personally well "informed about what passes; if you have anything of "importance to communicate to me, be good enough to "send some one at my expense. . . .

"What has passed in England since January could not "but influence our policy; we could not bear to be repre- "sented as an *obstacle* to English policy. The radical papers "have gone further: they have recommended giving Belgium "to France. In countries where the press leads opinion "astray, the greatest wildness must be expected. My part "is, as it has been since 1831, very simple. I put the ship "through the manœuvre which is necessary to preserve it; "about twenty-three years of navigation give some title to "confidence. Farewell, my dear minister, and believe me to "have always the same sentiments towards you.

"LPLD."

* *King Leopold to M. A. Nothomb, Minister of Justice.*

"Laeken, April 10, 1856.

"MY DEAR MINISTER,

"I have already given you by word of mouth my con-
"gratulations on the happy issue of the law of extra-tradition.
"The question was of high importance, and I am glad to
"be able to tell you how I appreciated the talent and firm-
"ness you showed on the occasion. It is with real grati-
"fication that I render you this testimony, whilst renewing
"the expression of my sincere feelings towards you.

"LEOPOLD."

* *King Leopold to M. Lebeau, member of the Chamber of Representatives.*

"Laeken, July 20, 1856.

"MY DEAR M. LEBEAU,

"I would not let this anniversary pass without sending
"you a few words in memory of the day, now far distant from
"us, when we entered Brussels together.

"You then, by your ability and courage, took a decisive
"part in the events which brought about the foundation of
"the kingdom of Belgium. If since then the country has
"been happy and tranquil, if its prosperity and importance
"in Europe have been on the increase, you must feel
"justifiable satisfaction in carrying back your thoughts to
"the time when you put your hand to this historic work.

"It is à great pleasure for me to recall to you to-day
"that recollection, and to add that, during these five-and-
"twenty years, crowded with so many different events, you
"have never ceased to usefully and nobly serve your coun-
"try, and you have always shown yourself the same towards
"me, always full of affection, devotion, and all the best
"feelings.

"LEOPOLD."

* *King Leopold to Baron Nothomb, Minister of State, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at Berlin.*

" Laeken, July 20, 1856.

" MY DEAR MINISTER,

" I keenly regret that your health prevents your coming " hither, but your thoughts will carry you back to that 21st " of July, 1831. On referring to the *Monitor* of that day, " on seeing what royalty promised and has held to, there is " no restraining a feeling of lively satisfaction. It is a fine " spectacle to see a country grateful after a reign already so " long.

" I hope still, please God, to continue its pilot, and the " future is pretty big with clouds. Of all the politicians of the " country, you are he who *never despaired* of its future, who " never *changed opinion*, and who displayed towards me the " most *true* and *constant* devotion, which not the slightest " cloud has ever obscured. I do not forget things of this " nature, and I like to remind you of them.

" Herewith a letter for the Prince of Prussia's son.

" Give me good news of your health; give my kind re- " membrances to the baroness; and believe in the affec- " tionate sentiments which I feel towards you with all my " heart.[2]

" LEOPOLD."[3]

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[2] Equal interest will be felt in reading the letter written by Leopold I. to the same statesman on the day on which he sanctioned the organic law of primary instruction :—

" Laeken, September 23, 1842.

" I returned from Ardennes suffering a great deal from a chill; " but I quite reckon upon seeing you during the day or this evening. " The law I have just signed is a great triumph for you, and I must do " you the justice to say that this difficult discussion was conducted by " you with great ability.

" LPLD."

[3] Next day the king wrote in equally affectionate terms to General

The King's Speech.

"July 21, 1856.

" MR. PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE,

" MR. PRESIDENT OF THE CHAMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES,

" I am deeply moved by the noble sentiments you have " just expressed to me in language so affectionate and at the " same time so elevated.

" I think I may recall, on this solemn occasion, some " passages of the speech of July 21, 1831 :

" ' I only accepted the crown you offered me with a view " ' of fulfilling a task as noble as it is useful, that of being " ' called to consolidate the institutions of a generous people, " ' and to maintain its independence.

" ' My heart knows no other ambition but that of seeing " ' you happy.'

" The accomplishment of this great mission encountered " numerous difficulties.

" The independence—acquired but yesterday—of this " good people lay as a problem before Europe, distrustful " and disquieted. Its free institutions, founded indepen- " dently of all intervention of royalty, had not yet been able " to receive the sanction of experience. Its improvised " administration was awaiting the reform of its organic " laws. Minds were divided by opinions proceeding from " passion, and influences proceeding from jealousy. Material " interests, abruptly disturbed, were in alarm about the " future.

" Soon, thanks to the good feeling of the country, order " and unity appeared in the midst of this momentary con- " fusion ; to doubt and disquietude succeeded confidence

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Chazal, at that time invalided in the south of France. He expressed to him regret at not seeing him on horseback at his side.

" and security. Inwardly strengthened by the organization " of its divers administrations, and by the foundation of a " national dynasty, the country emerged from its fatal isola- " tion, and saw its independence guaranteed by the most " solemn treaties. An intelligent activity was impressed " upon works of public utility. The existence of an army, " strong by means of training and discipline, was assured. " The constitutional institution of the civic guard became its " useful auxiliary for the maintenance of order and for the " defence of the country. The springs of public prosperity " were re-opened. Commerce and industry were developed " with a rapidity which bordered on the prodigious, and " that ancient industry of the country—agriculture—followed " up this movement with wise improvements. Letters, " science, and the arts, shone as in the brightest days of our " history. Belgium felt she was alive.

" Our nationality lacked yet one trial. There burst out a " crisis, profound and universal, but in this very crisis " Belgium contrived to find new strength, to give new proofs " of vitality, to acquire new claims to general esteem.

" I like to trace to the nation itself the honour of a " privileged position which seems to defy the boldness of " our hopes.

" The old morality of the Belgian populations, their " profound sentiments of duty, their good sense, their " practical spirit, and their deference for the paternal views " of their King, all these qualities united powerfully contri- " buted towards making them avoid the danger of inveigle- " ment and excess, and to make them understand instinctively " the true conditions of our political existence.

" Gentlemen, since 1830, Belgium has contrived, in " her moral as well as material course, to accomplish the " work of a whole century. There remains for us a duty to

" fulfil; it is to follow out and finish, in the same spirit " which inspired its beginnings, the work of its still young " but brilliant civilization.

" As for the past, union was our strength, in the days of " triumph of our nationality as well as in the days of the " trials in which it was steeped but to gain fresh vigour. " As for the future, still in union lies the secret of our " prosperity, our greatness, and our duration.

" Seal we afresh the alliance between the nation and the " dynasty of its choice. Concentrate we the union of all " members of the great Belgian family in one common feeling " of devotion towards our beautiful country. Bow we down " before Divine Providence, which holds in its hands the " destinies of nations, and which, in its inscrutable wisdom, " has called away a beloved queen whose absence can alone " render imperfect the rejoicings on this memorable day."

N.B. This speech was not in entire conformity with the first sketch which M. de Decker, chief of the cabinet, had submitted to the king. From a feeling of modesty which does him honour, Leopold had demanded, amongst other things, the suppression of a passage which gave an eloquent summary of his long and glorious services. It is the extract which we have given at the end of the volume, " I dare " bear witness of myself," etc. It is impossible, as it seems to us, to better define and better characterise the part played at home and throughout Europe by Leopold I.

CHAPTER VI.

1856—1865.

THE CHARITIES BILL — PUBLIC DISTURBANCES — OPINIONS OF M. GUIZOT AND M. THIERS — TRANQUILLISATION — BIRTH OF THE DUKE DE BRABANT'S DAUGHTER—VISIT TO WINDSOR—ITALIAN WAR — BIRTH OF COUNT DE HAINAULT—THE EMPEROR NAPOLEON III.—STATUE OF KING LEOPOLD CROWNS THE CONGRESS COLUMN—ANNEXATION OF SAVOY AND NICE — POPULAR DEMONSTRATIONS IN BELGIUM — ILLNESS OF KING LEOPOLD — RECOVERY — LEOPOLD AND THE TEMPORARILY DIS-UNITED STATES—ANTWERP—M. FAIDER'S SKETCH OF KING LEOPOLD—THE MEXICAN EMPIRE—THE VAN EYCKS —LEOPOLD ON HIS TRAVELS—CORRESPONDENCE.

On the 11th of November, 1856, on opening the legislative session, Leopold reiterated to the representatives of the country the expression of his deep gratitude. "I was anxious," he said, "to "find myself once more in the midst of you, that "I might express to the nation the feeling of

" happiness I have experienced from the splendid " proofs of affection and devotion it lately gave " me on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the in- " auguration of my reign. These manifestations, " springing from the patriotic initiative of the " Chambers, will not have been unprofitable to " the country: they raise it higher in its own " eyes, and gain it honour abroad." He then said that his government attached particular importance to the bill in reference to charitable establishments, and he expressed a hope that the bill would be shortly discussed.

His Majesty, wise as he was, undoubtedly did not foresee that in this question, the many difficulties of which, however, he had many times pointed out, lay concealed the storm which usually follows the most glorious days.

There is no occasion here to pronounce an opinion on the merits or defects of the bill which had been presented on the 29th of January preceding. It will suffice to state that after giving rise to fierce controversies in the home and foreign press, it provoked violent discussions in the Belgian parliament. In recalling these stormy debates and the popular tumults which followed,

it is Leopold's personal part in the matter that we have here to examine and place in a clear light.

When, on the 21st of April, 1857, the discussion was opened in the Chamber of Representatives, there still remained the impression left by other debates which had revealed a growing spirit of exaction amongst a portion of the episcopate and a part of the Catholic press. These exactions and excesses were such that the cabinet had itself also energetically expressed its disapproval of such great intolerance and such complete forgetfulness of the very spirit of the constitutional institutions of Belgium. M. de Decker, Minister of the Interior, had especially distinguished himself by struggling against the ultras of his party, and by striving to bring them back to the paths of constitutional government rightly understood. But the discussion on the Charity Bill soon showed the effects of the suspicions diffused amongst the Liberals. It was prolonged with increasing animosity over twenty-seven sessions, and became transformed into a deadly struggle, whereof the echo caused great excitement outside the house. At last the speeches were mere Babel,

and crowds gathered about the Palace of the Nation. On the 27th of May the exit of the representatives was the signal for a deplorable exhibition: the crowds cheered the Liberal deputies, hooted the principal Catholic speakers, and insulted the papal nuncio. Next day the exhibition was of a still more serious character, and the agitation began to reach the provinces.

At 9 P.M. the king, who was on his way from Laeken to Brussels, was, nevertheless, the object of a noisy ovation. But the cheers of the people did not dissipate his profound displeasure: he was vexed and humiliated to see Belgium's good fame compromised abroad. The council having met, he expressed the opinion that order must be restored at once, even if recourse should be had to a state of siege. "I will take horse," he said, "if it be necessary, to protect the National "Representatives: I will not have the majority "outraged." His voice, his gesture, his look, all betrayed deep indignation. "It is the death "of parliamentary government," he continued, in still stronger language. "You understand that, "gentlemen—and you understand that to-day, this "28th of May, a stop has been put to parliamen-

" tary government, and the constitution has been " violated. Yes, the constitution has been " violated. I have kept my oath for twenty-six " years: I am now released from it. Let not " that be forgotten. . . . ." Already the Minister of War, after an interview with the king, had given orders for all the disposable troops in the other towns to be moved towards Brussels and the environs. The king, after an hour's deliberation, declared his intention to be, to summon next day the chief members of the opposition and tell them what painful sensations this commotion caused him. Such a step might appear unusual; but circumstances justified it. However, the council having met again next day at noon, there was no further question of this summoning of the chiefs of the "left." The king had thought of another plan: he presented to the council a paper containing the three articles voted on the 27th, and proposed to make them into a special law that very day during the session of the Chamber. By this means the dignity of the government would be preserved, and an end would be put to a discussion which agitated the country. Two ministers warmly

approved of the king's notion, and the others finally came round to it. But in consequence of conferences which took place before the Chamber between the delegates of the two parties, an adjournment to June 2nd was finally carried. The intention was to give time for tranquillisation of minds. On the 30th of May the situation again changed. Ministers, having understood that the "left" would never consent to a compromise involving recognition of the very principles of the bill, returned to the idea of making a bill separate from the articles already adopted, and taking a vote upon it at the day's session. Meanwhile disquieting news from the provinces, and information as to the mood of Brussels, occasioned dissensions in the very heart of the cabinet. Ministers having met again under the presidency of the king, the majority proposed to adjourn the Chambers for some days, and the king, although he would have preferred to take the vote on a special bill, signed the decree. The Minister of the Interior repaired to the Chamber and read it.

This adjournment was but the prelude to a more decisive resolution. The communal

councils of the majority of the chief towns and of a great number of other towns had just memorialised the king to satisfy the public wish by withdrawing a bill which had created such lively alarm. Ministers yielded before these manifestations, more formidable in their estimation than the clamour of a few hundred agitators. On the 13th of June, in concert with the most moderate and the wisest members of the "right," they advised the king to declare the legislative session closed, engaging, moreover, to propose the adjournment of the Charities Bill to the opening of the succeeding session. "A discreet "government," said the ministers, "ought to "take account of public opinion even when it is "misled by passion or prejudice." The king approved, and expressed his own sentiments in a letter to the Minister of the Interior. "I will "not pass judgment," he said, "on the bill. I "would never have consented to give a place in "our legislation to a law which might have had "the fatal effects that were feared; but without "committing myself to an examination of the "law itself, I take account, as you do, of an "impression produced on this occasion on a con-

"siderable portion of the population. There "are in countries which keep the management of "affairs in their own hands impulses which are "rapid, contagious, and communicated with an "intensity more easily seen than understood, and "with which it is wiser to compromise than to "reason." He exhorted the majority to follow the noble course in which the cabinet had taken the initiative. "They will give the world," he continued, "a high idea of their wisdom and their "patriotism. They will preserve in their ranks "that union which is, for all parties, the first-"fruits and the best recompense of a noble and "good deed done by all in common."[1]

In the councils which followed the close of the session, the king continued to give his ministers proofs of his confidence and sympathy. "You "have," said he on the 21st, "a great and noble "duty to perform; you are the shield of the "moderate party in the country. . . . . You may "count upon me."

With reference to the situation resulting from

[1] King Leopold to M. de Decker, Minister of the Interior, June 13, 1857.

the latest discussions in parliament, Leopold desired to know the opinion of some eminent persons in England and France. In the latter case he applied simultaneously to M. Guizot and M. Thiers. Placing themselves at different points of view, these two statesmen pronounced different opinions. M. Guizot, giving his attention only to the question of principles, drew up with reference to the bill a favourable judgment, which he afterwards developed in a long essay published in the *Review of the Two Worlds*, under the title of *Belgium and King Leopold, in* 1857. Understanding, however, that it is the part of state policy under certain circumstances to abate the rigour of principles, he paid a compliment to the discretion of the King of the Belgians. "King "Leopold," he said, "stopped the fight without "surrender of arms; he watched over the peace of "the country intoxicated whilst remaining in a "position to appeal to the country sober; he "supported the question without pushing it to "extremity: this was the true conduct of a con-"stitutional king, but a king." M. Thiers, with his mind full of the situation of public opinion, looked above all at the political character of the

law. Convinced that it was of a nature—with or without reason—to scare the middle classes, he saw in it real danger. In his opinion, King Leopold ought not to fix his supporting point amongst the clergy and the exclusive adherents of the clergy; but the Belgian throne ought to be supported on the middle classes. These considerations, developed by M. Thiers with that practical sense for which he is distinguished, made a great impression on the king's mind. He did not abandon his ministers, certainly not; but he strove to put to silence and rest a question which had already given rise to so many grave incidents.

People were beginning, indeed, to lose all recollection of the deplorable events which in the month of May had distressed Brussels, when there took place the marriage of the Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian, governor-general of the Lombardo-Venetian Kingdom, with Princess Charlotte, daughter of King Leopold. This union had been officially announced on the 14th of the previous November. On the 22nd of December the archduke had returned to Brussels, and his stay at the palace had been prolonged until the 8th of January. The hand

of the princess had been officially demanded in the name of the Emperor of Austria on the 21st of July, 1857, and the marriage celebrated at Brussels six days after.

Bound by honour to his ministers, Leopold had seen with sorrow the violent attacks of which they were the object in the majority of the journals of their own party. The Liberals reproached them with having betrayed the crown; the ultra-Catholics, more audacious and more vehement, accused them of bowing their heads to the storm. Leopold put machinery in motion at Rome itself, with a view of calming this effervescence, which caused him serious apprehension. Pius IX., who had during his exile at Gaeta felt much cause to be pleased with the King of the Belgians, received a letter, wherein the king thought it his duty to warn him of certain excesses and violence injurious to the Church. "My impression in June," wrote King Leopold, September 18, "was that the Conservative party "would get out of its difficulties by a *moderate* "and *generous* behaviour. There was good "reason for that belief, but a portion of the press "and certain individuals have greatly spoilt and

"weakened the excellence of the position. It "must not occur again or it will spoil the posi- "tion after a disastrous fashion."[2]

On the 18th of October following, ministers met again at Brussels under the presidency of the king, who was full of graciousness towards his advisers, encouraged them to firmness, and was of opinion, in opposition even to M. de Decker and some of his colleagues, that they should not attach too much importance to the approaching communal elections. "Remember," he added, "you have my entire confidence." With these words the king rose from the session, which had already lasted two hours; but on arriving at the door he turned back, and standing leaning upon the back of his chair, he said again: ". . . . . Re- "member you are inside the fortress, and have "me with you, and none but yourselves can put "you out."

Two days afterwards the king started for Ardennes. On the 27th, there took place the elections for the new communal councils, and a great majority in all the important towns declared in favour of the Liberal candidates.

[2] King Leopold to . . . . . , Villa Giulia, September 18, 1857.

In the presence of this fresh and powerful manifestation, ministers split. Two members[3] maintained that to retire would be in a manner to betray the parliamentary majority which had stood by them; the others, whilst recognizing the force of that constitutional doctrine, would have it that they had taken office to practise a policy of conciliation, and that late events would oblige them thenceforth to be in fatal subordination to a party. The chief of the cabinet (M. de Decker) declared further that he was by no means certain that the majority by which he was supported was supported in its turn by the majority of the country. "Now, in my eyes," he said, "it is one of the most dangerous posi-" tions that can be taken up in a constitutional " country, to govern with a majority which may " be accused of no longer representing faithfully " the feelings and wishes of the nation." In his interviews with the king, also, M. de Decker had said that he "did not want to be through sheer " obstinacy the Guizot of the Belgian monarchy."

On the 30th of October ministers sent in their resignation; but their dissension was still

[3] M. A. Nothomb, Minister of Justice, and M. Mercier, Minister of Finance

exhibited in their last act, each persisting in the opinion he had previously expressed.

When M. H. de Brouckere had declined the commission of forming a new administration, the Liberal ministry of 1847 and 1850 again took office, had the dissolution of the Chamber of Representatives proclaimed, and thus broke up the parliamentary majority. So prompt a transformation by the government was stigmatized in more than violent terms by the journals representing the ultra-Conservatives. In their madness they abjured, to use the expression of a celebrated writer, the ancient doctrines of the Catholics, and disavowed all the principles of liberty. "After all," added Count de Montalembert, "it is not necessary that the Catholics "should be in power. What is necessary is that "they should not desert public life and abjure "liberty. It is good for them to be tried some-"times in the fire of opposition and disgrace. "Those are often their days of progress and of "victory."[4]

Leopold had recovered his serenity and re-

[4] *The New Ministry and the Dissolution of the Chamber in Belgium*, by Count Montalembert, *passim*.

newed his quiet confidence in the future of Belgium. When, in February, 1858, on the birth of the Princess Louise Mary Amelia, eldest daughter of the Duke de Brabant, the Chambers came to present their addresses of congratulation, the king replied: "..... The third genera- "tion of a dynasty is, in point of fact, a new "guarantee, and this guarantee is above all "precious when it is intimately connected with "the existence of a nation. Your noble pro- "vinces sought long and vainly in ages gone by "to exist by themselves alone, and not to depend "on any other interest but their own. Un- "happily, or perhaps happily for us, their efforts "to attain this noble and great end were always "abortive. The present position of Belgium is a "fine one, the future open to her is none the "less. . . . ."

It was not saying too much. About this same time Lord Palmerston, premier of England, expressed himself in the following terms: "The "Belgian people enjoy a measure of political "liberty and prosperity which it has fallen to the "lot of few nations of the continent to share." But hear also the manly advice which the Duke

de Brabant gave his compatriots: "A nationality "young as ours is," said he, "must be bold, "always progressing, and confident in itself. For "success it is enough to dare. . . . ." Without doubt immense progress had been made by the country since 1831; but it was, nevertheless, necessary to strive to preserve political liberties, and to increase still more that prosperity which excited the envy of other nations.

On the 25th of January, 1858, King Leopold, accompanied by the Duke de Brabant and the Count de Flandre, was present at the marriage of the Princess Victoria of England with Prince Frederick William of Prussia. They returned again to Windsor in June, and on the 11th of the following August received at Malines Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, who, disembarking at Antwerp, went through Belgium to Prussia.

On the 24th of September, the king, who had passed some time at his villa on Lake Como, returned to Brussels. Next day he presided at the fête or review of schools, a touching and heretofore unexampled ceremony. At the opening, a month afterwards, of the railway from

Brussels to Arlon, he declared anew and energetically that his destiny was inseparable from that of Belgium. "My reign," he said, "which begins " to be a long one, has been entirely dedicated to " the existence of the country."

More exalted and more notable still was the language of the king when, on the 21st of July, 1859, amidst the anxieties caused by the Italian war, he replied to the address presented to him by the Chamber of Representatives on the occasion of the birth of the Count de Hainault. "I thank "the Chamber," he said, "for the expression of " such kindly, and I may say perfectly affectionate " sentiments. We have now springing up on " Belgian soil the second generation since the pro- " clamation of national independence. During " the years of peace on which the Chamber is so " justly gratulatory, Belgium has occupied a " position often envied by other nations. She " owes it above all to the moderation which it " gives me pleasure to acknowledge is one of the " distinctive traits of the Belgian character. As " long as I live I will serve as a shield to Belgium. " But that this moderation, that our handsome " behaviour with respect to other nations may be

" appreciated, Belgium must be compact in itself, " must be something more than an agglomeration " of provinces, must have a centre of action. I " throw myself on the confidence of the Chamber " and of the country. For eight-and-twenty " years I have been amongst you; and, during " that period, I do not think it can be said that I " have exposed Belgium to entanglements or " dangers. It is not in vain I am convinced that " your patriotism and wisdom will be appealed " to. . . ." The king was making a direct allusion to a project of which the Chamber had just been put in possession, and which proposed to concentrate the national defence on Antwerp. This project had been originally suggested by Lieut.-Gen. Chazal, who had been at the head of the Ministry of War from 1847 to 1850, and who had just been summoned afresh to this post of confidence. Before adopting his minister's views, Leopold had discussed them long and warmly; but at last he yielded to reasons which appeared to him triumphant, and from that moment he had shown zealous partisanship towards the new scheme. By defending it in the legislative Chambers with indisputable

ability and manly eloquence, General Chazal justified all the hopes King Leopold had built upon him. General Chazal, the distinguished and chivalrously devoted soldier, has his own place apart in the life of Leopold I. The king felt towards him an almost paternal affection, writing to him frequently and without restraint, taking him into his most important confidences, entrusting him with the most honourable missions, lending him encouragement, attending to his counsels, and finding support, finally, under the most difficult circumstances in his unshakable fidelity. It is rare fortune when such a connection is maintained for more than twenty years, and is severed only by death.

Leopold had just passed through one of the most anxious periods of his long reign. Just as he had been opposed to the Eastern war, in the same way he had viewed with affright the storm which was about to burst on Italy, and later still he could not but dread the shock which might be produced by another tempest on the banks of the Elbe and the Eider. Was it blamable? But wherefore blame him? Was not he before everything King of the Belgians, and was it not the security

of Belgium to which he was bound to give the chief place in his thoughts? However, there is no disguising the fact that Leopold belonged to the old school of politicians: he would have liked to maintain the Triple Northern Alliance, because he saw in it the only guarantee for a positive public law in Europe. "The only real "barrier we had of old," he himself said in 1859, "was the imposing front of those three great "powers: that is all over now. . . ." The conduct of Austria appeared to him, to say the least, indiscreet. "The present war," he wrote on the 30th of April, 1859, "is a duel in which the "chances are bad for Austria. She could not "keep Piedmont even if she were victorious; she "cannot have the pretension to move on France. "I think all the rules which apply to duels are "applicable to the present war. England and "Prussia will have much in their power. Prussia "could not engage in a struggle which is impor-"tant, no doubt, for her, but which is, neverthe-"less, a foreign one; but it is immensely "to her interest that the war should be ended as "speedily as possible. If Prussia in this attitude "of affairs is too humble she will miss her object,

"and the war will become general. . . ."[5] On the 8th of June he still wrote, not disguising his patriotic anguish: "The struggle in Italy is "formidable: its issue will be decisive of the "supremacy of France in Europe. They talk of "*localising*: that is all very well; but victory in "its effects is not to be localised. The future of "Germany and of ourselves will be decided this "summer. . . ."[6] According to King Leopold, if France returned to the position assured to her by the peace of Lunéville, the independent existence of Europe was compromised; Prussia and Germany then held in their hands the fate of Europe! . . .

In the month of June, Leopold had again repaired to England to pay his annual visit to Queen Victoria. Towards the end of the month of August, after the Italian war, he met at Ostend the Prince Regent of Prussia, whom he had known for a long while, and whom, in his own words, he had always highly esteemed. He was careful not to neglect a prince who even then governed

[5] King Leopold to M. Nothomb, Minister Plenipotentiary at Berlin, Laeken, April 30, 1859.

[6] King Leopold to M. Nothomb, Minister Plenipotentiary at Berlin, Laeken, June 8, 1859.

Prussia, and whom extraordinary events were to reserve for so exalted a destiny. Some time afterwards Leopold was at Biarritz with the Emperor of the French. He stayed at this imperial residence from the 14th to the 25th of September. He had a pavilion close to that occupied by the emperor, and he dined with Napoleon III. pretty regularly every two days, and had very long conversations with him. During the summer of 1864 he met the Emperor of the French at Vichy. He saw him once more for the last time at the Palace of Compiègne, just when, returning from Switzerland, he was already suffering from the malady which carried him off. Napoleon III. and Leopold I. moreover kept up a correspondence which might be called regular. They never missed writing at the New Year, and whenever some interesting circumstance made an exchange of ideas an advantage.

King Leopold did homage to the good will the Emperor of the French bore to Belgium. It is perfectly true, moreover, that Napoleon III. never dreamed of taking advantage of our internal dissensions. "Very different," said the king himself, "would our situation have been,

if our " neighbour were not well disposed, a fact which " is indisputable and of very great importance."[7]

Whilst Leopold was in the Pyrenees in 1859, Brussels was the scene of an imposing ceremony. On the 26th of September there took place, with extraordinary pomp, in presence of the Duke de Brabant and the Count de Flandre, and with the co-operation of the Chamber and all the authorities of the country, the solemn inauguration of the monument raised in honour of the Congress and the Constitution. From a feeling of delicacy the king had abstained from presiding in person at the inauguration of the monumental column, though he had presided at the laying of the first stone. When the question was to be decided as to what statue should be erected on the top of the column, in other words, whether the king or an allegorical figure of the Constitution would be more suitable, the king refused in the most peremptory manner the national compliment there was a desire to decree to him. But the legislature did not consider themselves bound in

[7] King Leopold to Baron Nothomb, Plenipotentiary at Berlin, Laeken, April 30, 1859.

this case to defer to his Majesty's will: they instructed the Minister of the Interior to give the column the crowning figure that suited it. M. Rogier eloquently justified the wish of the Chambers. In the presence of the representatives of the nation he spoke the following words: "By "decreeing in September, 1849, the column in "honour of the Congress, the king took the in- "itiative in an act of national gratitude towards "an assembly memorable amongst all, as he said, "for its patriotism, its enlightenment, and its "moderation. It was the part of the repre- "sentatives of the country to take in their turn "the initiative in another act of national gratitude "which is at the same time a testimony and an "emblem. Emblematically, it is constitutional "royalty crowning the fabric of our institutions; "testimonially, it is the glorification for the past "and for the future of the monarch for whose "rare wisdom and to whose rare happiness it was "reserved by Providence to found and uphold the "government of the country by the country, by "preserving intact the union of order and liberty."[8]

[8] The statue which crowns the Congress-column is the work of G. Geefs.

A memorable incident was soon to furnish new testimony of the devoted attachment the Belgian people cherished for their first king.

As the project of uniting Savoy and Nice to France had not been regarded with indifference by Europe, the imperial government thought it right to anticipate any objections on the part of England. M. Thouvenel wrote, on the 19th of March, 1860, to Count de Persigny, at that time ambassador of France at the Court of St. James's, the celebrated despatch in which he said: "Analogies are quoted, and that is made a point "of departure for sowing distrust. But have "these analogies a foundation in fact, and does "there really exist any parallel between our posi- "tion Alps-wards and our situation Rhine-wards? "No doubt the treaties of 1815 had established "in the north a state of things not without "resemblance to and connection with that which "still continues to-day on the side of the Alps. "The kingdom of the Netherlands had been "created with a design in conformity with that "whence the territorial demarcation of Sardinia "is derived. As Sardinia has, so *it* had the com "mand of positions which gave it the power of

" delivering over the approaches and entrances to " our territory into the hands of foreign armies. " After an interval of fifteen years these arrange- " ments were fundamentally modified with the " concurrence of the great powers themselves. " Belgium was formed, and its neutrality, recog- " nized by Europe, has from that moment pro- " tected all the portion of our frontier which was " exactly the most exposed, and in regard to " which France might have felt legitimate dis- " quietude. In a word, all that was threatening for " us in the north in the provisions of the treaties " of 1815 is no longer more than a memory " relegated to the domains of history by the Con- " ference of London. On that side we have no " longer any kind of guarantee to demand."

The annexation of Savoy and Nice was effected; but in the House of Commons, Lord John Russell, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, had let fall the following significant expressions: " Should there arise a question which " would make it appear to us that France was in " the wrong, or that she was acting in that spirit " of encroachment which has sometimes been the " moving influence of a great military nation,

" then we would form an alliance with the other " great powers to oppose those designs."

Meanwhile a portion of the French press had not considered it their duty to imitate the cautious language of the imperial government. Taking up a queer, aggressive attitude, it threw doubts upon the Belgians' attachment to their nationality, and sought to dazzle them by setting before their eyes the mirrored advantages of an annexation like that of Savoy. But the nation, feeling outraged by these imputations and attempts, rose in a mass to celebrate with unheard-of enthusiasm the twenty-ninth anniversary of the enthronement of Leopold I. It was a grand display, in which all the provinces, all the towns, and all classes joined with admirable spontaneousness; it was an imposing demonstration, the mighty echo of which was long heard throughout the whole of Europe. " Nations," said Leopold, at this memorable conjuncture, " die only by suicide, and Belgium has " just proved that she knows how—and means— " to live independent."

As in 1856, he with his family visited the principal towns of the country, and everywhere received proofs of the love of the Belgian people;

and everywhere also he found words in which to express at one time kindliness, at another deep meaning.[9]

The remembrance has not yet died out of that manly speech in which, replying on the 8th of July to the burgomaster of Ghent, a few steps from the ancient clock-tower, he assigned their true character to the manifestations which were soon about to extend over the length and breadth of Belgium. Calling up Old Flanders's most noble claims to glory, the patriotism of the Breidels and the Arteveldes, the bravery of the heroes of Courtrai and Roosebeke, he said: "The place where we stand recalls ancient "and glorious memories. These old communes "were the seat of commerce, manufacture, and "the arts, when a great part of Europe was still "plunged in darkness. From the remotest times, "love of country and of its independence had "been preserved as sacred fire in the hearts of "their inhabitants. The most precious blood "was often poured out to obtain a free and "national existence. Success did not crown "these noble efforts. It was reserved for us to

[9] *See* the historical picture called *Belgium in* 1860, passim.

" found on the widest basis what the country had " so long yearned for, to unite in it all the " elements which constitute the happiest political " and social existence. In this position we were " found by the storm which in 1848 convulsed " Europe, when we alone, to our glory, escaped " every danger, when our political existence was " preserved from every attack. Whatever the " future may have in store, 1848 points out to " us how we shall be able to pass through its " trials with honour and with success. Two " generations of my family have been born in " your midst, and own with you a common " country. My devotion to you during a long " reign you all know, and so long as it shall " please Providence to preserve me, I will be " faithful to my task and unchangeable in my " paternal affection for you."

These national demonstrations created particular notice in Holland, and contributed to re-establish a perfect understanding between the two countries which but lately formed the kingdom of the Netherlands. The Dutch felt that the Belgians were their natural allies, and that the two nations were destined to prosper together,

and to find in their union a further guarantee of liberty and independence. Already, in October of the preceding year, the Count de Flandre had paid a visit to the royal family of the Netherlands at the Palace of Loo. After the manifestations at Brussels, the King of the Belgians had an interview at Wiesbaden with King William III. Next year this sovereign gave a plain proof of his high esteem for the King of the Belgians. On his return to his dominions he stopped at Liège, where he was received in state by the elect of the Congress of 1831. There, in that fine Walloon city, was sealed the new union of Dutch and Belgians; a voluntary union, and by so much the more solid than that which had been forced upon the two peoples in 1814.

The death, so premature and so unexpected, of H. R. H. Prince Albert, came to cast a gloom over the close of this year. On the 14th of December, 1861, this excellent prince was taken away from the love of the Queen and of the people of England. The Duke de Brabant and the Count de Flandre were present at Windsor to attend the funeral of their cousin-german. The king, who was deeply affected by the death

of his nephew, the distinguished prince whose surest and most enlightened friend he had been, left for Osborne on the 26th of December, and his visit to Queen Victoria was prolonged to the 10th of February, 1862.

He returned out of health, and was obliged to keep his room for several weeks, and to submit to painful operations. The evil, which about the 13th of April was thought to be arrested, soon made fresh progress, and necessitated a fresh operation on the 4th of May. During the following days the bulletins published by the official gazette were by no means reassuring. The Duke de Brabant, then in Spain, was sent for by telegraphic message, as were also Princess Charlotte and her husband, Archduke Maximilian. Prayers were ordered in all the dioceses for the speedy recovery of the king. In June the news became still more alarming. At last a sensible improvement showed itself, and the invalid gradually recovered his strength. The convalescence, however, took a long while. For nearly six months the king was unable to leave Laeken, where, on the 2nd of September, he received a visit from the Queen of England. On the 24th

he took the road to Brussels, where his almost unhoped-for recovery gave rise to one of the most extraordinary demonstrations of this memorable reign. Never will the spectator forget that fine warm day in autumn, those streets where floated the national flag, those thousands of citizens advancing to meet the aged king, those cheers which announced his coming, the enthusiasm of the Civic Guard, and the still greater enthusiasm which burst forth when Leopold appeared in the balcony of the palace, holding in his arms the Count de Hainault.

On the 8th of October the king received the congratulations of the diplomatic body. On this occasion he and Mr. Sandford, United States minister, had a long and interesting conversation on the subject of the war which was distracting the great republic. Leopold did not appear to believe in the approaching triumph of the Federal cause, whilst Mr. Sandford was full of hope, and rejected every idea of conciliation with the Southern States. He tried to convince the king, at the same time that he made himself the interpreter of the warm regard of the government and people of the United States for his Majesty's person.

Leopold answered that during the whole of his reign he had never ceased to receive proofs of this good will, and he considered it was justified by his own sentiments with respect to the Union.[10]

The king's most lively anxiety at the time was the agitation which, for divers reasons, was

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[10] In July, 1863, Mr. Seward wrote to Mr. Sandford to say that he had waited for a decisive event to combat the doubts of King Leopold. He announced the defeat of General Lee, and at the same time sent a chart of the states of the Union, on which the position of the belligerents was marked out. "The king will see," said Mr. Seward, "that it is not in the power of the slaveholders to dictate "conditions, but that it is to their interest to propose an "arrangement. I am authorized by the President to submit "this view to the King of the Belgians. Whilst performing "this duty I cannot omit to add that the king, by his "generous and disinterested attitude towards the United "States, has acquired a right to give advice to our govern-"ment, and that it has been received with sentiments of "respectful and grateful affection."

When Mr. Sandford handed over to the king, who was at Ostend, the chart sent by Mr. Seward, the Nestor of Europe as he was already called, repeated anew his desire of seeing peace established shortly in America. "When two gentle-"men," said the king, "have fought gallantly and have both "been hit, it is customary to strive to put an end to the "affair before it ends fatally for one of the two adversaries. "In the same way, in this case, feelings would be less "bitter and future harmony more certain if advantage were "taken of the exhaustion of the South to effect a compro-"mise."

being more and more exhibited at Antwerp on the subject of the fortifications.

The communal council had for some time past resolved to memorialize the Head of the State against the plans adopted. The solicited audience, which had been put off in consequence of the king's illness, was given at Laeken, November 6th. After listening to the address of the communal council, Leopold answered firmly: "To get an "impartial account of the agitations there has "been an attempt to produce at Antwerp, one "must go back to an epoch close to the events "which brought about the political independence "of the country. I found in Antwerp a fortress "of the first rank, but confined within lines which "had become too narrow for the development of "the city, and possessing but few outer works "calculated to protect it by carrying the defence "farther off. This state of things was one of "extreme peril for the city, which would thus "find itself in case of siege exposed to almost "certain destruction. I soon had a desire ex-"pressed to me, and that desire was very often "repeated afterwards, to see the lines extended; "and I myself many years ago put forward an

" opinion that the lines needed to be widened,
" and that it was desirable to remove danger from
" the city by putting the principal means of
" defence in the detached forts. The state of
" profound peace in which Europe happened to
" be, and the impossibility of dedicating sooner
" any portion of the resources of the country to
" this great work, have been the reason why these
" labours have been put off, without, however,
" letting out of sight the so often repeated wishes
" of the city of Antwerp. As early as 1848 it
" was possible to pay serious attention to the
" measures to be taken, and as long ago as 1854,
" numerous plans were put forth, several, and the
" most extensive of which originated in Antwerp.
" These are they which have been adopted, not-
" withstanding the considerable sacrifices which
" they will entail upon the country. The super-
" ficies of the city of Antwerp before the extension
" was, not including the fortifications, 182 hectares
" (about 455 acres). Since the extension the
" interior of the place is found to be 1023 hectares
" (about 2557 acres), not counting the fortifica-
" tions, that is, nearly six times its former extent.
" The mean distance from the new forts to the

" clock-tower of Antwerp is 7500 mètres (about
" four miles and three-quarters). The former
" liabilities in respect of the old fortifications have
" almost entirely disappeared, and the government
" will give its attention to making the new ones
" as little irksome as possible. As for the new
" northern fort, it ought to have on the city side
" the same circle of liabilities[11] as the old northern
" fort. However, in the spirit of conciliation, my
" government has consented to reduce this by more
" than half. Efforts have been made to disturb
" men's minds in reference to this new fort. The
" old was far from protecting the city on the river
" side; it was, therefore, indispensable to replace
" it by a new one, which could offer on this side
" efficacious defence. The dangers to which the
" city was formerly exposed on the side of the
" river were demonstrated in 1830 by the arrival
" of ships of war in front of the very quays of the
" city, which, had this naval force been more con-
" siderable, would have found itself liable to be to a
" great extent destroyed. The new northern fort
" completes a system of defence in which there is

[11] *Zone de servitudes*—the space (round a fort) which may not be built upon, etc. *Transl.*

" nothing exclusive, and the destination of which " is to defend the city against all dangers, from " whatever side they may come. The great object " of the national policy ought to be to maintain " the neutrality of the country, but this policy " will command the confidence of our neighbours " only when it gives them a conviction that the " country is really strong and in a position to " fulfil the obligations imposed upon her by her " political existence. You know the affectionate " devotion I have always felt for the city of " Antwerp. I have always striven to keep all " danger far from you, and, when that has been " impossible, I have shared it with you."

This sovereign, whose wisdom and uprightness were appreciated across the Atlantic as well as in Europe, had been chosen arbiter in a dispute between England and Brazil. On the 21st of June, 1863, he received at Laeken, Lord Howard de Walden, English minister, and M. do Amaral, Brazilian chargé d'affaires, and delivered them the text of his arbitral decision, which was in favour of Brazil. At another time his arbitration was invoked in a dispute between the United States and Spain.

As the reign of Leopold I. went on, his ascendancy and popularity became wider and stronger. He was about to become associated with an act which would make him still more dear to the Flemings. On the 14th of September, on the antique and celebrated Friday Place at Ghent, he presided at the solemn inauguration of the statue of James van Artevelde. As Head of independent and neutral Belgium, he honoured the memory of the wise middle-class man, the brave captain, the far-seeing politician, who during the violent commotions of the fourteenth century had proclaimed the neutrality of Flanders, and by laying the foundations of a confederation with Brabant and Hainault had let in as it were a far-off glimpse of a free Belgium, the Belgium of the nineteenth century. At the royal banquet which followed the paying of homage to the eminent citizen whom Edward III. called his great friend, Leopold expressed himself in the following terms: "I am "glad to find myself again amongst you, and I "seize upon this opportunity of telling you how "touched I have been by the patience and forti- "tude with which the populations have supported "a manufacturing crisis over which we unhappily

" could exercise no influence. It is within your " knowledge that for thirty years the manufactures " of Ghent have never ceased to be the object of " my liveliest solicitude. We have to-day done " honour to the memory of a man of energy, " who, at an epoch overflowing with perils, shielded " by his rare courage the existence of this great " commune. These facts belong to ages which " are far removed from us, but the independence " of peoples is ever based on valour and intelligence. " I hope that in our country there will never be " lack either of valour or of intelligence; and so " there will be assured to it a future full of honour " and prosperity."

Noticeable, again, was the more than respectful reception given to the aged king, when, on the 10th of November he opened for the last time the session of the legislative chambers. He had then the satisfaction of being able to announce the abolition of toll on the Scheldt. " Since the " last legislative session," he said, " the country " has seen the accomplishment of an event which " was the object of its legitimate aspiration for " ages: the Scheldt is irrevocably set free. " Having been effected in common accord with

" the Netherlands, the abolition of the toll which " burthened the navigation strengthens our " kindly relations with a neighbouring and " friendly people: the complete liberty of our " noble stream, sanctioned by all the powers, " henceforward forms a portion of the public law " of maritime States."

A learned magistrate, who had been a member of the cabinet of M. H. de Brouckere, was summoned in January, 1864, at the time of a great ministerial crisis, by the king, who wished to intrust to him the formation of a new administration. The interview lasted more than two hours. M. Faider has perpetuated the remembrance of it in a sketch which also contains some very acute and very striking remarks upon the character of Leopold I. " Though much tried," says he, " by lingering pain, he had the old up- " rightness, the old firmness and nobility of " attitude, the old kingly bearing; I was, as I " had always been, struck with that cold but " courteous kindness which marked his official " relations: he first discussed seriously the matters " which occupied at this time the minds of all; " he enunciated his own views, estimated the

" value of opinions, passed judgment on men and " measures, argued out and laid down conclusions; " he had still all the vigour of his character, and " all the freshness of his mind: then quitting the " grave and serious, as apparently done with, he " turned the conversation and gave himself up by " little and little to that quiet gaiety which was " part of his nature, and the expression of which, " with its mixture of plentiful anecdote and keen " irony, had an irresistible charm.

" I have recalled this interview, because I " really recognised at it what I had always " observed in this extraordinary man; a real " intelligence in affairs, which he reviewed with " calmness and lucidity; a mixture of passionate- " ness and easy-goingness; great ability in weigh- " ing men and setting their characters in a clear " light; a quiet gaiety couched in picturesque " language; irony, sometimes sharp, but always " without bitterness; some hankering after literary " reminiscences and recondite anecdotes; a " gaiety of the right stamp, terminating an inter- " view begun under the influence of serious " pre-occupations. There you had the whole " man: uniting all mental qualities, discussing

" grave questions, pausing for reflection, dis-
" closing all his intellectual graces, his innume-
" rable reminiscences, and his delicate vein of
" pleasantry. . . . . .

" He was a man of infinite mental gifts, and I
" may repeat what has often been said, that he
" was more gifted than the most gifted of his
" advisers; he made few objections, because his
" comprehension was quick and deep; he asked
" few questions; he obtained his due without need
" of asserting himself; he temporised when he was
" not satisfied; he showed himself, in the regular
" routine of business, a truly constitutional king,
" assured of his ministers' honesty, and respecting
" their responsibility.

" He never injured anybody; he had no feeling
" of vengeance; he never, in his life, inflicted
" a wound or gave offence. No doubt he did
" not like every one who served him, and he did
" not reign thirty-five years without feeling
" resentment or anger; I may even assert that
" his anger was terrible; and at such times his
" sharp, deep eye, a little veiled, was filled with
" piercing flashes; but he soon recovered, and
" the idea of vengeance did not enter into his

"mind; his vengeance was confined to a sarcasm "which was sometimes unequalled for keenness.

"He was naturally indulgent; he liked to "exercise his prerogative of mercy; he himself "added postscripts to petitions delivered to him "by persons he liked: he never authorised an "execution without long hesitation and cruel "anguish; he studied with care the papers and "reports before refusing to a great criminal a "commutation of sentence. He exercised libe- "rally the charity too often begged in the sphere "of royalty. He was disinclined to the prosecu- "tion of writers of low stamp who dared to libel "him; he felt he was too much loved and too "strong to accept a legal remedy against them; "he was sure to be sufficiently avenged of in- "solent pamphleteers by the judgment of the "country . . . . ."[11]

The ministerial crisis, which had been reached in January, and was destined to be prolonged until May, brought out once more, by putting them to a fresh and final proof, the high qualities

[11] *King Leopold I. and Belgian Royalty*, by C. Faider, some time Minister of Justice. (Bulletin of the Royal Academy of Belgium, 2nd series, vol. xxi.)

of the sovereign who was considered the model of constitutional heads. In presence of a sort of parliamentary interregnum, for the strength of parties was evenly balanced, he showed an honourable impartiality. In January, the conservatives having declined the offer made to them in the person of their chiefs, M. A. Dechamps and M. de Theux, to take office, the king tried in vain to compose an administration. He went in person to Prince de Ligne and appealed to his devotion; but the president of the senate was of opinion that a ministry of compromise would be still-born. The king upon that repaired to England, where he remained more than a month, leaving parties, with unrestrained liberty, time to reconsider themselves and come to a solution. On the king's return, towards the end of April, M. Dechamps was summoned again to Laeken, and he submitted to the Head of the State a political programme to which the majority of the conservatives had at last agreed. They also wished, as the liberals had done in 1847, to inaugurate a new policy, a policy progressive and democratic. They proposed, then, at the same time both a communal and an electoral reform. M. Dechamps

developed his views, and the king, who had a great esteem and real affection for him,[12] listened to him with close attention. Afterwards he made some very serious objections. "What you say is "very sensible, and even very enticing," he answered: "but you must place yourself at royalty's "point of view. If you conservatives begin a "steeple-chase with the liberals, what will that "bring us to?" The parley was still prolonged: the king showed himself most accommodating, so far as his own prerogative was concerned, but not in what touched the electoral system: he would not venture upon ground of which the solidity appeared to him suspicious; he felt a repugnance to introducing confusion of the character and tendencies of the two parties by which he had hitherto governed. This part of the programme not being admitted, the former ministers consented to withdraw their resignations so as not to perpetuate a crisis which had already lasted too long. But fresh incidents having occurred to complicate a serious and embarrassing position, the king, on

[12] He wrote to him in 1845: "I am happy to think that "I have in you a minister whose heart and head deserve the "most sincere esteem."

the advice of his council, proclaimed on the 17th of July the dissolution of the Chamber of Representatives. The electors, convoked on the 11th of August, gave the majority to the Liberals. Such was the issue of one of the most important episodes in the parliamentary annals of Belgium.

During these discussions, so interesting for a free country, attention had been occasionally distracted by the efforts which had been made to erect, under the auspices of France, an empire in Mexico. On the 14th of April, the noble Archduke Maximilian and his courageous consort embarked for that country which was destined, alas! to be so fatal to them. If Leopold followed with perfectly legitimate interest the first phases of the Mexican expedition, he had not taken the initiative in it. Assurance even is given that his powerful reason and extensive experience had from the first condemned that hazardous enterprise. But, thanks to a merciful death, he knew not, as has been said,[13] the terrible misfortunes which have resulted from it, and which he could not foresee, in spite of his alarms.

[13] *Cf.* an important article from the *Journal of Debates* republished in the *Belgian Monitor* of June 25, 1868.

Divination—prescience—what politician, how great soever he may be, possesses this gift in perfection? The vicissitudes of the present suffice to absorb his attention. When, the year before, Napoleon III. had proposed a European congress, Leopold wrote: "There is no disguising the fact "that Europe has entered upon a formidable "crisis, and it is of the highest importance to "watch over it."[14] The project of the Emperor of the French appeared to him, we may suppose, feasible: since he was already acquainting himself with the admitted rules of precedence amongst kings in these Amphyctionic assemblies.

At the close of the summer of 1864, Leopold desired to show himself in the province which, in 1831 and in 1859, had testified towards him the most affectionate and most energetic devotion. On the 5th of September, accompanied by the Count de Flandre, he repaired to Maeseyek to take part in the inauguration of the monument erected to the memory of the founders of the Flemish school of painting, John and Hubert van Eyck. "I am glad," he said, "to have my

[14] King Leopold to Baron Nothomb, Laeken, November 12, 1863.

" share in this day's fête. To do honour to the " memory of men whose glory, like that of the " brothers van Eyck has endured through cen- " turies, is to do honour to oneself. I seize this " opportunity of expressing to you the satisfaction " I have always felt with this good and faithful " Limburg. After a long reign of thirty-three " years (for in the state in which Europe has been " situated thirty-three years *are* a long reign), I " am glad to say that I have always received from " Limburg tokens of fidelity and patriotism. I " drink to the prosperity of so devoted a province, " which helped so powerfully to consolidate the " nationality."

Leopold had always attached capital importance to the progress of agriculture: and he kept himself personally acquainted with all discoveries, and himself gave notes of them to his minister of the interior.

On the 19th of September he visited the Agricultural Exhibition at Dinant, and to give a proof of sympathy to the good neighbours of his domain at Ardennes, he was present at the banquet which had been offered him by the *Society of Agriculture and Forestry* of the province of Namur.

A few days afterwards he started for Baden-Baden, Geneva, and Nice, wishing to see once more those beautiful countries which recalled to his mind other brilliant epochs of his life. Is not refreshment of memory renewal of life?

Subjoined is the correspondence pertaining to this chapter.

CORRESPONDENCE.

King Leopold to M. de Decker, Minister of the Interior.

"June 13, 1857.

"MY DEAR MINISTER,

"I am in receipt of the Cabinet's report, of yesterday's "date, and I lose no time in giving it my approbation. By "proposing adjournment of the discussion, you will take an "initiative which the circumstances indicate as the right "course, and which the country will understand.

"I profit by the occasion to address through you a "few words to the country which has given me so many "proofs of its attachment.

"A long and animated discussion, followed by incidents "which I deplore, took place in the Chamber of Repre-"sentatives on a bill presented by you.

"For the first time during the twenty-six years that I "have devoted myself to Belgium, the parliamentary debates "have given rise to difficulties of which the solution has "not immediately been forthcoming.

"You have acted with the greatest honesty and the "most complete good faith. You are firmly persuaded "that the bill, if it become law, would not produce the

" grievous consequences which have been ascribed to it. " I shall pass no opinion on the bill; I would never have " consented to give a place in our legislation to a law " which might have the fatal effects apprehended; but, " without committing myself to a consideration of the law " in itself, I take account, as you do, of an impression which " has been produced, on this occasion, amongst a con- " siderable portion of the population. You find in countries, " which have the management of their own affairs, these " emotions, rapid, contagious, and spreading with an in- " tensity more easily verified than explained, and with which " it is wiser to compromise than to argue.

" The free institutions of Belgium have been in practice " for twenty-six years, and with admirable regularity. What " is necessary that they may continue to work for the future " with the same orderliness, with the same success?

" I do not hesitate to say, moderation and reserve " amongst parties. I think we ought to abstain from " agitating any question which can kindle bellicosity of " spirit. I am convinced that Belgium can live happy and " respected, by following the paths of moderation; but I " am equally convinced, and I say it to the face of every- " body, that every measure which can be interpreted as " tending to *fix* the supremacy of one class of opinions " over another, is fraught with danger. We have no lack of " liberty, and our Constitution, wisely and moderately acted " upon, offers a happy balance.

" My sincere and deep attachment to the destinies of " the country has given rise to these grave reflections of " mine. I communicate them to the country, to yourself, " to the majority of the national representation.

" Under the circumstances in which we are placed, the " majority of the Chamber, whose wishes, as a majority, are

" and should be my guide, has a noble position to take up,
" a position worthy of a great party.

" I advise it, as you will propose to it, to give up con-
" tinuing the discussion of the law. It is to the majority
" that it belongs to play this generous part. In accepting
" it to its fullest extent, it will give the world a high idea of
" its wisdom and patriotism. It will preserve in its ranks
" that close union which, for all parties, is the first fruits
" and chief recompense of a noble and proper course pursue
" in common.

" Last year the country thanked me for my devotion;
" to-day I thank it for its confidence.

" This letter will let you see how glad I am to find
" myself in agreement with you, and how highly I approve
" of your conduct.

" My desire is to continue to watch, with you and your
" colleagues, over the interests of this beautiful and much-
" loved country.

" Please believe, my dear minister, in the affectionate
" sentiments I feel towards you.

" LEOPOLD."

* *M. Guizot to M. A. Nothomb, Minister of Justice.*

" Val-Richer, August 13, 1857.

" I am glad, sir, that what I said of your law and of
' your country was to your liking. I had read your ex-
" cellent speeches. I thank you for having been good
" enough to think of sending me them. If I have not
" sooner thanked you for them, it is because I wished you
" to have my opinion publicly expressed before it was
" expressed to yourself. I thank you also for thinking my
" opinion good for something. It is a great pleasure to say
" what one thinks true, and a greater to see the truth

" efficacious. I have sometimes tasted that pleasure. And " then, I have felt the pain of the contrary. Political life is " a great mixture, as is all human life.

" Be good enough, sir, I beg you, to thank M. Dechamps " for me for his kind remembrance, and accept the as- " surance of my high consideration.

" GUIZOT."

" October 30, 1857.

" SIR,

" Your Majesty knows the result of the communal " elections.

" In spite of constitutional principles, it is indisputable " that these elections have, by reason of circumstances, a " character and bearing *essentially political.*

" Could the Cabinet, which considered it a duty to " resist illegal manifestations, take no account of the *legal* " *manifestation* which has lately taken place in the chief " towns of the country? We think not.

" We are convinced that the law touching charitable " establishments was a mere pretext for this political " struggle, and that the real aim is the overthrow of the " parliamentary majority and of the Cabinet supported " by it.

" Whatever be done, then, with reference to this law, " be it adjourned over a long period, or even withdrawn, it " is clear that the Liberal party will not be satisfied. " Emboldened by its victories, it will make on the majority " and on the ministry *war to the knife*, which will throw the " country into the embarrassments of a crisis, of which " resistance on our part would only increase the dangers.

" In fact, to come honourably out of such a crisis, your

" Majesty's Government would have need of a *defined* and " *dignified* position. Now such, unfortunately, is no longer " our position before the Chambers and before the country.

" Everybody must agree that for a year past the public " feeling has been profoundly modified, not to say completely " upset. There would be authority, then, for believing that " the Chambers are no longer a faithful representation of " Belgium as it is. The Government, although resting con- " stitutionally on the support of a regularly formed majority, " would appear, in the eyes of the bulk of our citizens, little " conversant with the play of our institutions, to usurp " an authority of which the legality would be henceforth " doubtful, and which it could no longer exercise with " dignity.

" Further, its functionaries themselves, seeing the im- " minent accession of a different political opinion, would " weaken the action of the Government, which is already " but too much enfeebled.

" The administration, in all its degrees, would be reduced " to a state of collapse, leaving the Government only the " choice between irremediable anarchy or the employment " of violent means repugnant to our convictions, clashing " with our programme, and certain to make us lose, in a " few days, the honour and advantage arising from three " years of a moderation honestly promised and honestly " carried out.

" Sir, we are under no illusion about the gravity of the " situation. It is really the consciousness of this gravity " which makes it our imperative duty to beg your Majesty " not to put to any longer trial a devotion we should have " been happy to continue to show you, but which would " henceforth be useless. Powerless to work good, powerless " even to arrest the tendency impressed upon the public

" mind, the Cabinet owes it to itself not to bear the " responsibility of eventualities which the exalted wisdom of " your Majesty will know how to conjure away.

" Consequently, we have the honour to place our port- " folios in the hands of your Majesty, etc.

" P. DE DECKER,
" VISCOUNT VILAIN XIV.,
" A. DUMON,
" GENERAL GREINDL."

*

" Brussels, October 31, 1857.

" SIR,

" In view of the communal elections of the 27th, the " majority of the members of the Cabinet, influenced by the " motives explained to your Majesty, are of opinion that the " present ministry cannot any longer, with advantage to the " service of the king and the good of the country, remain at " the head of affairs.

" Without hiding from ourselves the difficulties of the " situation or the serious character of the late manifesta- " tions, provoked by the agitation which has been caused by " using as pretext a bill of which the import has been mis- " understood or misrepresented, we do not think that the " situation demands the retirement of the Cabinet. We " think, on the contrary, that we should remain at the post " confided to us by the king, and that there is more danger " to the country in leaving it than in remaining at it. The " electoral fact which has just been accomplished is nothing " novel; in 1854, as in 1836, not a single large town gave " a majority to the conservative candidates for the " Chambers. Electoral statistics prove this quite clearly, " and if it had been necessary to take account exclusively

" of this tendency of electors in the great centres, for a " long time past no moderate administration would have " been possible. The thought of the country is not, thank " God, confined entirely to the large towns; and yesterday " again the attitude of the country places as well as that of " the small towns protests against the exclusive spirit which " dominates or rather oppresses the first.

"We are of opinion, then, sir, that constitutionally a " Cabinet, supported as ours by a real parliamentary majority, " cannot and ought not to succumb before any body but the " Chambers. We are firmly convinced that to attach, even " exceptionally, to the communal elections so exaggerated a " significance, is to vitiate fundamentally the mechanism of " our institutions; is, in a word, to create a precedent with- " out example, as fatal to the principle of government as it " will be contrary to parliamentary rule soundly carried out; " is to accept impulse from the quarter in which it ought to " be received; to trouble and turn off the fountain of consti- " tutional power: the outburst which *ought to be suppressed* " would thereby become legalised. We think that energetic " resistance ought to be made to successive encroachments " of which the end would be confusion of attributes and " sheer anarchy. We consider, finally and especially, that " the retirement of the ministry, under present circum- " stances, must inevitably lead to a fatal situation for the " majority who brought us to the head of affairs, and have " there supported us *faithfully* and *courageously* for nearly " *three* years; a majority which it is a part of our duty not " to sacrifice before the country, legally and regularly con- " sulted in 1858, has calmly expressed its will.

"However, sir, appreciating as we do whatever there " may be of plausibility in the motives of our honourable " colleagues, and not wishing, at this conjuncture, more

" than at any other, to secede from them, we have to pray " your Majesty to relieve us of the duties which you " deigned to confide to the devotion of those who are, with " the most profound respect,

" Sir,
" Your Majesty's
" Most humble and faithful Servants,
" ALP. NOTHOMB ; MERCIER."

* *King Leopold to General Chazal, Minister of War.*

" July 12, 1859.

" MY DEAR MINISTER,

" I am in the highest degree pleased with the plans. " What will deserve attention will be the Scheldt and its " defence by land ; that it may not be possible, with all " these new means to get possession of one side of the " river, and so cut off communications.

" The enormous importance of the position of Verona " strikes one more than ever. Without this position there " would be the situations of Mantua and Peschera, but there " would be no Austrian army in Italy any longer. A word " of warning to the members of the Chamber ; it is not " possible to gainsay this truth.

" LEOPOLD."

* *Same to Same.*

" MY DEAR MINISTER,

" I felicitate you with all my heart on the vote of the " Chamber.[1] It was, considering the extreme confusion " and division of votes, very ticklish.

[1] Vote on the bill for the fortification of Antwerp.

"Let us hope now that the Senate will behave well.[2] "With reference to the camp, my children will be there "probably on the 6th. I think that after their departure it "will not be a bad thing to strike it. I fear sickness.

"I should not be sorry for a change of air; I have been "suffering more or less for ten days.[3]

"Take care of your health, which is very precious to one "who feels for you so true an affection.

"LEOPOLD."

* *Same to Same.*

"Marseilles, October 2, 1859.

"MY DEAR MINISTER,

"Your excellent letter of the 26th reached me here on "my arrival on the 29th, and I read it with very great "pleasure.

"That after an experience of twenty-eight years there "should remain people in Belgium who are better ac- "quainted with the affairs of Europe than I am, and who "can better appreciate what is necessary for the existence "of Belgium, to which they had already put an end in 1831, "is pretty strange, but such is human nature. I cannot but "be satisfied with my journey; the results are extremely "satisfactory, and I will try to keep them so. I thought a "great deal of you at Tarbes, which pleased me much; and "in the most southern part of France it is far more beauti- "ful than the road from Toulouse to Bordeaux, about which "I had illusions which were disappointed.

"I hope all will go well: if one could only stop this

[2] The Senate adopted the bill by a large majority.

[3] The king left next day for the Pyrenees. From the 14th to the 25th of September he stayed at Biarritz, close to Napoleon III.

" fruitless struggle of parties. I hope these lines will find " you in good health, which your *success* should have in- " vigorated, and I think of you with the most affectionate " sentiments.

" LEOPOLD."

* *Same to Same.*

(Extract.)

" Laeken, November 9, 1860.

" MY DEAR MINISTER,

" . . . . Please get a report made on another question.

" My constant desire is to see at Antwerp a basin which " shall be a free port. Is there room enough for that? I " think there is: military genius will be able to give me " information on that point. It is evident that inhabitants " must be attracted to the immense new city.

" A free port would bring thither foreign traders, who " would not be sorry, perhaps, to have at Antwerp a pleasant " resting-place. The disagreeables attending, probably, the " concourse of those foreigners would be modified by pros- " pects of gain to the landholders. I hope you are well. " Ever with *immutable affection*,[4]

" LEOPOLD."

* *Same to Same.*

" MY DEAR MINISTER,

" I saw yesterday M. de Montessuy.[5] I told him that " I should be glad to see our troops co-operating in the

[4] This letter proves that the king had not forgotten the new destiny he prophesied for the commercial metropolis of Belgium, when, in 1856, he laid the first stone of the new maritime establishments. " Antwerp," he said, " ought, by its position and the security of its magnificent port, " to take the first rank amongst the commercial places of the world."

[5] Minister of France at Brussels.

" Chinese expedition; that a well-organized brigade might " be formed, but that in a constitutional country every " enterprise of the kind is beset by difficulties; that I " begged him to ask his government if this offer were to its " taste, and, if so, whether it would inform us how it thought " matters could be arranged.[6]

" I ended by telling him that all details of the affair " must be managed between you and him. The question " is, therefore, best put thus: on our side, good intent, but " difficulty in the way of execution.

" If matters take an acceptable form, steps might be " taken in the business: if otherwise, proof will have been " given of good intent, and we can withdraw, since no one " is bound to what is impossible.[7]

* *Same to Same.*

" Laeken, May 11, 1860.

" MY DEAR MINISTER,

" Your affectionate letter gave me very *sincere satisfac-* " *tion:* you have known for a long while that my *confidence* " in you, and my *affection* for you, are sentiments unchange- " able. Latterly, on all sides and in all countries, the " question has been mooted as to the position of cavalry in " modern times. The fact is, that in spite of new arms, the " position is but little changed. As an attacking force, " cavalry has never been able to produce a great impression " when the attacks have not been combined with a plan. " This was the case at Waterloo. Under other circum- " stances, as at Marengo, partial attacks decided the " battle. At Leipzig, on the 16th of October, the grand

[6] The king's aim was to establish a sort of confraternity in arms, without, however, going beyond neutrality.

[7] The project did not take effect.

" attack of French cavalry had a prodigious effect, and " nearly caused great disasters to the allies.

" In France, in 1814, the successes of Napoleon were " due principally to the charges of the cavalry which he " had fetched from Spain. Fère-Champenoise, where only " the cavalry of the allies was engaged, could not have " taken place without cavalry, as the infantry did not " arrive until next day. For large armies in the field there " is no security without a strong force of cavalry, no follow- " ing up successes without a numerous cavalry. Napoleon " had proof of that in 1813. For a small country like ours, " which would be in a sort of state of blockade till assist- " ance came to us, it is very necessary to keep up com- " munications and go reconnoitring. To do so well, the " cavalry, if it were not so costly, ought to be of double its " present strength, and able to be sent *in detachments on all* " *sides to keep up communications in the country and with the* " *succours which might be hoped for.*

" Infantry cannot move *anywhere;* it would all at once " find itself *cut off* and *surrounded* by the enemy. If we " were to have war, we ought to form, as in 1831–1833, " seventh and eighth squadrons, for the indispensable " service of Cossacks, indispensable as well to preserve " communications—which are so important—with the in- " terior, as to connect us with the succours on which we " have a right to count. It is believed that the Austrians, " on the day of Solferino, might have paralysed the French " right with their cavalry; but it must have been made use " of; instead of which it took itself off.

" I have heard that Niel was very uneasy about this " cavalry.

" Ever with the same affectionate sentiments,

" LPLD."

* *Same to Same.*

"Laeken, May 1, 1861.

"MY DEAR AND EXCELLENT MINISTER,

"I have seen with pain that they have been turning the "heads of the working men of Ghent. As a rule every civil "outbreak ought to be repressed by the local police, sup- "ported by the civic guard, and the regular troops should "not be mixed up with the matter until the other forces are "beaten. The authorities are generally fond of mixing up "the troops prematurely in these difficulties: for that reason "it is well to give instructions from time to time to the "military authorities. When there is a struggle with the "government, which thank God has not happened here for "thirty years, it is another matter, and no development "whatever can be permitted.

"It might be useful to suggest this to the ministers of "the interior and of justice.

"Ever very affectionately,

"LEOPOLD."

* *Same to Same.*

(Extract.)

"Wiesbaden, August 15, 1861.

". . . . I am very pleased to see that my stay in camp "made a good impression upon the troops. I hope not to "be wanting to them for some time to come still, and, if "luck will have it so, I shall faithfully share their dangers.

* *Same to Same.*

(Extract.)

"Laeken, March 24, 1862.

"MY VERY DEAR MINISTER,

"They try to torment and annoy you in every way. It "is unworthy conduct, and stupid too, for they have in you

" a real protector. The most noble way of avenging your-
" self is to bring to a good conclusion that which will for the
" first time make these provinces secure instead of being the
" plaything of all the world.

" You will find in me, as ever, the most faithful
" support.

* *Same to Same.*

(Extract.)

" Laeken, July 10, 1862.

" . . . . I quite believe that the works of Antwerp suffer
" from these heavy rains. Lord Palmerston put down
" Cobden famously when he attacked him for exaggerating
" the French armaments.

" Account thereof will have to be made here. It will
" be the best answer to the absurd answer given by Cobden
" to one of our ingenious associations ' for the best means
" ' of destroying the existence of Belgium. . . . ' "

* *Same to Same*

" Windsor Castle, March 30, 1864.

" . . . . The fortifications of Duppel prove the import-
" ance of fortification, and earthworks when they cannot be
" carried by escalade deserve great attention.

" Even the English do justice to the efficacy of the
" Prussian artillery.

" General observation shows that the later wars have all
" turned to sieges: that shows that we were right. . . . "

* *Note of King Leopold to M. J. Van Praet.*

" January 21, 1865.

" Please tell Chazal that his conduct justly brings him
" European fame. The King of Prussia again spoke to me

" of it with admiration at Baden. The Grand-Duke Con-
" stantine also. . . ."[8]

* *King Leopold to General Chazal, Minister of War.*

" Laeken, September 25, 1862.

" MY DEAR MINISTER,

" Please charge General Chapelié to express to the " pupils of the Military School my acknowledgments for " their devotion yesterday. . . . Proudhon's remark to the " emperor, 'Sir, Belgium awaits you,' was not very plainly " borne out yesterday. Ever with the same affectionate " sentiments,

" LPLD."

* *Same to Same.*

" Vichy, July 25, 1864.

" MY DEAR MINISTER,

" There is an intention here of sending vessels to bring " back a portion of the troops from Mexico. That would " be in September. One would like to send on that occasion " a portion of the Belgian legion, as that would be on every " account very desirable, and the troops would thus get " conveyed without extra expense, which is a very serious " consideration.

" Please let me know what is the present state of things. " It is very warm here, and that has cost me an odious cold ; " and as there is next to no shade, you suffer a great deal " with a cold. Please let me know in what state the legion " is. Ever with the same affection,

" LEOPOLD."

[8] The king alludes to the persevering efforts of General Chazal to carry his scheme of concentration at Antwerp, and to introduce the new artillery into the national armaments, efforts which had just been crowned with success.

* *Same to Same.*

" Laeken, May 29, 1865.

" MY DEAR MINISTER,

" I have read with great attention the report of the " detachment of Colonel Potier: it shows the *heroic courage* " *of our few troops.*[9] . . The feat is GLORIOUS *for a people* " *who since* 1831 *have had no occasion* to show that spirit " *without which*, alas! there is *no such thing as a* PEOPLE, " for it is without means of resistance. I cannot refrain, as " one of the oldest generals, if not the oldest general living, " from deploring the system followed by some military men, " of sending out a few heroic troops, as in this case, ex- " posing them to no purpose, and encouraging the enemy, " who know the localities. This system ought never to be " followed.

" With the most friendly and affectionate sentiments,

" LEOPOLD."

* *King Leopold to M. de Decker, Minister of the Interior.*

" Laeken, Aug. 14, 1855.

" MY DEAR MINISTER,

" I add to these lines a *Review of the Two Worlds*, " which contains something about a manure about which I " should like to have further information. You know that " the sand of our coast is composed almost entirely of " shelly particles: the stuff of which the *Review* speaks " must resemble our sea-sand: it would be as well to verify " that. I have always been struck with the use to which " sea-sand might be turned in the case of hard soils, if the " carriage were not so dear.

" The weather being a little better, gives some hope for

[9] Affair of Tacambaro.

" the harvest, a matter of the most immeasurable import-
" ance for our populations, who deserve a better winter
" than their last, so full of privations.

" Accept the expression of my very sincerely affectionate
' sentiments.

" LEOPOLD."

* *King Leopold to General Chazal, Minister of War.*

(Extract.)

" Baden, Oct. 14, 1864.

" . . . . When I left Laeken I was not very well, and
" the weather which is so very cold has done me no good :
" I hope, however, it will get a little better again. My
" very dear minister, may God bless you as you so well
" deserve. . . . ."[10]

* *Same to Same.*

(Extract.)

" Laeken, Dec. 1, 1864.

" . . . . You sleep too little; with your brain-work
" sleep is indispensable. I also suffer in that way, especially
" during the last two months; but I manœuvre with extreme
" patience to obtain just a little bit of sleep. My health
" has not yet arrived at the state it was in last October;
" but I try to subdue my tempers : that is anything but
" easy . . . . ."

[10] The health of the king had suffered some rude shocks the year before. On the 24th March, 1863, he wrote : " I have been now " thirteen months suffering the most atrocious pain." Then June 3 : " . . . I continue to suffer a great deal. . . . I have a very good " English doctor, Mr. Thompson, in whom I feel great confidence. " He, too, is of opinion that if last year I had been under care in a " hospital I should have been cured in two or three months, and here I " am at the fifteenth month, without a distinct prospect of a cure, seeing " the extreme difficulty of getting at one of the pieces. . . . "

CHAPTER VII.

1865.

LEOPOLD IN ENGLAND — THE DANISH QUESTION — LEOPOLD RETURNS FROM ENGLAND IN BAD HEALTH — CRITICAL STATE OF LEOPOLD — HIS DEATH AND BURIAL — GRIEF AT HOME AND CONSTERNATION ABROAD — TESTIMONIES TO HIS WORTH — QUEEN VICTORIA ERECTS A MONUMENT TO HIS MEMORY IN ST. GEORGE'S CHAPEL, WINDSOR — WHAT LEOPOLD ACCOMPLISHED FOR BELGIUM — LEOPOLD WAS BELGIAN BY ADOPTION AND BELGIAN IN POLICY—CORRESPONDENCE.

WHEN springtide reappeared, on the 23rd of March, 1865, Leopold repaired again to England. He stayed at Windsor Castle until the 19th of April. The Danish question occupied his thoughts. "The affairs of Schleswig," he wrote, "make slow progress. There are no good pros-"pects of alliances."[1] The very cold weather had

[1] King Leopold to Baron Nothomb, Laeken, March 11, 1865.

done him much harm; he returned with a terrible bronchitis, which soon created serious disquietude. Did he foresee his approaching end? With a smile, half-playful half-melancholy, he had said the year before to one of his former ministers: "I am getting old; I shall probably not "live very long; but I shall be able to say after "a long reign that I have been a happy king." In the month of July, another statesman for whom he had always felt the highest regard, having paid his felicitations on the thirty-fourth anniversary of the king's accession, His Majesty replied in a few words which denoted a kind of resignation together with a melancholy reflection on the past: ". . . . We are still left," he said, "of those "belonging to that epoch which had its good "side, and which has been much changed. . . . . "My health has been sadly shaken by this "wretched weather, so cold in England. The "faculty now say that I am going on well; "I hope they may be right."[2] He wrote again more gloomily: ". . . . I am sorry to say that "people are at the pains here to make them-

[2] King Leopold to M. H. de Brouckere, Minister of State, Laeken, July 21, 1865.

" selves troubles. That is not according to the " true spirit of the country. . . . ."

Thinking that sea-air might help to restore his strength, the king repaired to Ostend, on the 17th of August, and remained there till September 18. On the 7th, Queen Victoria had come to see him; it was to be their last interview.

On returning to Laeken, Leopold received a visit on the 13th of October from his grand-nephew King Dom Louis of Portugal, who was accompanied by the young queen, daughter of Victor Emmanuel, King of Italy. A few days afterwards the death of Lord Palmerston came as a fresh warning to the illustrious old man. He thus saw the disappearance one by one of the chief of those who had helped to found an independent Belgium; yesterday, Joseph Lebeau, the courageous and eloquent minister of 1831; to-day, Lord Palmerston, a firm friend and a constant and energetic champion.

Lord Palmerston died on the 18th of October, at Brocket Hall. On the eve of his death, although very feeble already, he was summoning up once more his old recollections; he recalled with

satisfaction the fact that he had prevented, in Mr. Roebuck's words, a European war by rejecting perfidious counsels, by not opposing the separation of Holland and Belgium, and by lending his active co-operation to the foundation and recognition of the new state, which was in a manner the keystone in the arch of European equilibrium. During a lethargy he was heard to murmur: "The treaty with Belgium! "Ah! . . . . Read me the sixteenth clause "again. . . . ." Mr. Ashley, his grandson, did read him the article which sealed the independence and neutrality of Belgium. When he had finished, Lord Palmerston, transported in spirit to that famous Conference of London which had laid the foundations of the new kingdom, spoke the words, "France acknowledge. . . . ." Then, his thoughts wandered, and the words he was still murmuring became unintelligible. A few days afterwards the popular statesman, the faithful adviser of Queen Victoria, the true friend of King Leopold, was reposing beneath the vaults of Westminster Abbey. Having profited by his sojourn at Ostend, the king showed less regard for the advice of his physicians. On the 9th of

November he insisted on going to his estate at Ardennes, where he had, during so many years, devoted himself to the manly exercise of the chase. But this trip was fatal to him. On the 23rd he was brought back to Laeken in a state which was already serious. On the 2nd of December the *Belgian Monitor* officially announced the king's illness.

This news soon spread throughout Europe, and the journals of France, Germany, and England discussed the eventualities which might occur on the disappearance from the scene of the illustrious sovereign who had for so long been the personification of the independence of Belgium. The most formidable suppositions were put forward by some; others demonstrated the worthlessness of them. In reality the disquietude was greater abroad than in the country itself. The Belgians looked the future calmly in the face. They had faith in the solemn engagements taken by Europe, and they were assured that the whole nation as one man would proclaim with enthusiasm, and would be equal to defending energetically, the noble and wise prince who was about to be Leopold II.

The illness which was to carry Leopold I. to the grave was making rapid progress. Nor was the king under any delusion. On the 9th he traced out with a pencil some words in German, to the effect that he felt quite calm, and awaited death as a deliverance. In the night there was reason to believe that the crisis was imminent. Ministers repaired to Laeken; but on their arrival the august invalid had just fallen asleep. On the 10th (it was Sunday morning) he sent for the Duke and Duchess de Brabant and their children, as well as the Count de Flandre. He was perfectly serene and calm; nevertheless the loud and difficult breathing showed that the last moment was approaching.

By the princes stood the two oldest servants of Leopold I., M. Julius van Praet, steward of the household, and M. de Conway, manager-general of the civil list. For thirty-four years M. van Praet had lived at Leopold's side, always consulted and constantly seeing the growth of that confidence with which he was honoured by his sovereign. Close confidant, respected adviser, channel of communication between the Head of the State and the ministers, eminent in politics,

and of consummate experience, but as modest as able, he had, with a tact by no means common, always striven to keep himself invisible, and to circumscribe rather than extend his difficult and delicate part. The king, perceiving this old friend, stretched out his hand and pressed the other's affectionately. He likewise gave his hand to M. de Conway, to whom he said farewell in German, and whom also he called his devoted friend.

Seeing the fatal hour approaching, the Duchess de Brabant leaned over the king and spoke to him a few tremulous words. The Rev. Dr. Becker then drew near, and the king, who preserved all his consciousness, conversed with his chaplain. When, towards eleven o'clock, the President of the Senate, the President of the Chamber of Representatives, and the ministers were introduced into the august invalid's room, he was surrounded by his children and grandchildren in tears, and with one of his hands between the hands of the Duchess de Brabant, as she knelt at the foot of his bed. He was expiring gently without a murmur, and almost without a struggle. At a quarter to twelve Leopold I. was no more.

The ministers, met in council, published the following proclamation :—

" Belgium has lost the king who shared her for-
" tunes with unalterable devotion during the whole
" course of a long, peaceful, and glorious reign.

" After struggling heroically with the phy-
" sical sufferings he had to fight against in the
" latter years of his life, he has finally been
" vanquished by death—he, whom Belgium, in
" her grief and her gratitude, has already pro-
" claimed the father of the country.

" The Belgian people, full of veneration for
" the memory of the wise and loyal monarch
" whose loss it mourns, will, faithful to itself, await
" with confidence the approach of the day when
" the representatives of the nation will take the
" oath of the heir to the throne.

" To guarantee to Belgium her liberty, her
" prosperity, and her independence, Leopold II.,
" who has already won the hearts of the popula-
" tions, will follow the great example of his
" illustrious father, and he will find the whole
" nation united to support him energetically in the
" accomplishment of his noble and patriotic duty."

The official journal then drew attention to

the fact that, by virtue of the constitution, the constitutional powers of the king were, from the date of the king's death to the taking of the oath by the successor to the throne, exercised, in the name of the Belgian people, by the ministers met in council and on their responsibility.

Next day the Senate and Chamber of Representatives were officially informed of the king's death. The minister of foreign affairs (M. Rogier), repaired with his colleagues to each chamber and expressed himself as follows: "We come to per-
"form the painful duty of announcing the death
"of the illustrious and ever-popular head of the
"great Belgian family.

"Deep grief is in the hearts of our popula-
"tions, who, though overwhelmed with sorrow
"for the past, raise themselves up full of con-
"fidence in the future. The feeling is not
"confined within the limits of the country:
"abroad, where the king's name was universally
"respected, there are everywhere mingled with
"expressions of the highest esteem for the reign
"which is at an end, the most sympathetic wishes
"for the reign which is beginning.

"Soon the heir to the throne will appear in

" the midst of the assembled Chambers to take " the constitutional oath, which he will keep with " the same fidelity as his august father. Your " patriotic and unanimous co-operation, hence- " forth at the service of Leopold II., will allow " him, gentlemen, to continue and confirm the " national work, carried on so gloriously by " Leopold I., and thus to insure to Belgium " fresh days of liberty, peace, and prosperity."

On the 12th of December, at nine P.M., the mortal remains of Leopold I. were removed from Laeken to the palace at Brussels. All the population was a-foot in spite of the icy temperature and the late hour. The departure from Laeken had been preceded by a very moving ceremony. The corpse, laid in a coffin all draped with black, had been placed upon a stage in one of the ground-floor rooms; behind was a table with a crucifix and two tapers; at the head of the coffin was the chaplain, on the left the princes in mourning, in the doorway the chief personages of the king's household. After an address from the chaplain, twelve non-commissioned officers of the regiment of Grenadiers ranged themselves about the coffin, lifted it up,

and, followed by the princes, carried it to the hearse which was waiting at the bottom of the doorsteps. When the corpse had been laid there, the Duke de Brabant and the Count de Flandre slowly reascended the steps and re-entered the palace. At nine precisely the funeral procession began to move, under an escort of guides, whilst guns were fired from minute to minute. The crowd, which reached from the palace of Laeken to that of Brussels, preserved a religious silence. The general aspect of the funeral scene was truly thrilling. On the arrival of the procession at the palace of Brussels, all the highest personages of the state descended to the bottom of the royal staircase to receive the corpse. The coffin, covered with a huge pall of black velvet edged with gold and studded with lions embroidered in gold, was carried to the first floor by non-commissioned officers of different corps of the army. The dignitaries of the king's household went in front of it; immediately after it came three Protestant ministers, then the presidents of the chambers, the members of the cabinet, the ministers of state, and the other personages invited.

During three days the public was admitted to the chamber of death where the king's body lay in state. The crowd besieged the entrances to the palace, everybody desiring to see once more —for the last time—the features of the prince who had won such great popularity.

Since the death of the archducal pair, Albert and Isabella, Belgium had never been called upon to conduct to the tomb the mortal remains of one of its sovereigns. The imposing ceremony of burial took place on the 16th. From the room adjoining the lighted chamber one could cast a last glance at the cenotaph guarded by an aide-de-camp and an orderly officer, sword in hand, points lowered. At the head of the coffin, under the canopy, stood the chaplain; on the two sides were ranged the other ministers of the Protestant religion to the number of twenty. At half-past ten the door of the throne-room opened and admitted the royal family. On the right of the heir to the throne walked Dom Louis I., King of Portugal. Then came the Count de Flandre with the Prince of Wales; then the Crown Prince Frederick William of Prussia and the Archduke Joseph of Austria; then, two and

two, Prince Louis of Hesse and the young Prince Arthur of England; Prince Adalbert of Prussia, Admiral of the Prussian Fleet, Prince William of Baden, Prince Nicholas of Nassau, Prince Augustus of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, Prince George of Saxony, the Prince of Wurtemberg, the Duke of Cambridge, the hereditary Prince of Hohenzollern Sigmaringen, the Duke de Nemours, the Prince de Joinville, and the Duke d'Aumale, brothers-in-law of the deceased king.[3] Immediately after the princes came the envoys extraordinary of foreign sovereigns and the deputation from the Austrian regiment called "The King of "the Belgians' Own." The representatives of foreign powers at the court of Brussels, the presidents of the Senate and of the Chamber of Representatives, and the ministers afterwards entered the funeral chapel, which was soon overfilled. The judges, the civil and military functionaries, the delegates from the communal and provincial councils and the special deputations thronged the great hall adjoining. The

[3] The reigning Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha being ill, had expressed his regret at being unable to be present at his uncle's funeral.

princes knelt at the foot of the catafalque, and Dr. Becker pronounced the funeral oration over Leopold I. Those present then re-entered the throne-room, and whilst the procession was forming on Palace Place, the coffin was lifted by twenty non-commissioned officers of the Civic Guard and of the army and carried to the car. At eleven o'clock precisely the procession, composed of all the great bodies of the state, began to move. The pall-bearers were, on the right, the President of the Senate, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the commandant of the district; on the left, the President of the Chamber of Representatives, the Minister of Justice, and the Colonel Commandant of the Civic Guard of Brussels. The car was surrounded by the dignitaries of the civil household and the officers of the military household. Immediately after walked the ministers of the reformed religion. They were followed by the royal family and the envoys extraordinary in mourning-coaches. Next came the diplomatic representatives of Belgium at foreign courts and deputations, which were a sort of epitome of the whole nation. Everywhere on the route of this vast procession the houses

wore a funeral aspect; at all the windows were ladies and children in mourning, and the men wore crape on hat or arm. The crowd which thronged the streets was silent and meditative; as the car passed, all heads were uncovered. Every five minutes there was the boom of cannon. The commune of Laeken was completely covered with black. A temple had been erected on Leopold Place in front of the new church, and there the funeral service was to be performed. When the car arrived at its destination, the princes, the members of the chambers, the ministers, the generals, and the principal authorities took their places in the nave. Just then, whilst the Protestant ministers were preparing to arrange themselves about the sarcophagus, and whilst non-commissioned officers of various arms were carrying in the coffin, the first two verses of a canticle were chanted. The notes died away and one of the ministers invoked for the august dead the benediction of the Most High. When the ashes had been thrown upon the coffin, the chants recommenced and the mortal remains of the king quitted the temple, passed beneath the portico raised opposite the

old church, crossed the nave of it, and were deposited in the vault where, since 1850, rest the mortal remains of Queen Louise. Beside the coffin of the queen was placed that of the king, in the presence of his sons, of the foreign princes, of the representatives of divers sovereigns, of the ministers, of the members of the chambers, and of the communal authorities of Laeken. The Minister of Justice having closed and sealed the tomb, every one went his way, in thought and meditation.

Amongst the most touching demonstrations to which the royal obsequies gave rise must be noticed that in which youth took the initiative. On the 23rd of December the students of Liège, Ghent, Antwerp, Mons, and Brussels went on foot to Laeken, where they were admitted into the burial-place containing the remains of Leopold I. and Queen Louise. The chief of the deputation, after paying pious homage to the sovereign who had insured to Belgium thirty-four years of peace and prosperity, laid upon the royal tomb a crown of evergreens, on which were to be read these simple words in black letters: "To Leopold I., from the students."

On the very day of his father's death the heir to the throne, in a letter breathing the most exalted sentiments, expressed to the Minister of the Interior[4] a wish that a monument should perpetuate the remembrance of that great reign which had just come to an end, and he headed the list of subscribers with a considerable sum; and the Count de Flandre followed his example. All the sovereigns of Europe shared in the mourning of the royal family of Belgium.

The Emperor Napoleon III., who was at the time at Compiègne, was the first to render solemn homage to the wisdom and lofty intellect of the prince who had held so eminent a position amongst the crowned heads, his contemporaries.[5]

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[4] M. A. Vandenpeereboom.

[5] "*To H.R.H. the Duke de Brabant, Brussels.*

"Compiègne, December 10, 1865.

"It is with feelings of most sincere sorrow that the "empress and I have just heard of the death of your royal "father.

"By his wisdom and lofty intellect he had placed himself "in the first rank of European sovereigns. He always "showed me so much friendship that I keenly deplore his "loss.

"I have no doubt your Royal Highness will follow on

From representative assemblies, also, came glorious offerings of homage to the memory of the wise constitutional monarch. To the legislative body M. Thiers expressed his feelings in these words: "It has sometimes been said that a "superior order of prince could not sustain the "simple part of constitutional monarch. I refer "to very recent and very striking reminiscences. "We have had close by us for five-and-thirty "years a prince of indisputably superior order, a "prince whom I had the honour of knowing— "and it is one of the recollections on which I "pride myself most—a prince who reigned over "Belgium so much to her advantage, and with so "much dignity, and who managed, with firmness "of character and great decision of mind, to "worthily discharge the part committed to him "by the constitutional institutions of his country: "and no one can dare to assert that there is in "Europe at this day greater respect for anybody "than was enjoyed by this prince, the head of but "four millions of men." In the House of Peers

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"the throne such a noble example, and I shall be always "glad to prove my friendship for you.

"NAPOLEON."

of Portugal, the Marquis Vallada, in proposing a complimentary address of condolence to the king-regent, Dom Ferdinand, nephew of Leopold I., declared that that sovereign had a claim upon the gratitude of patriots in all countries. Then, Count Lavradio, who had kept up a long connection with King Leopold, addressing the king-regent, in accordance with the resolution of the House, said of him: "The conspicuous wisdom " of this monarch, his consummate discretion, " and his long experience have consolidated the " independence of Belgium, almost the only " country of Europe where representative govern- " ment is a reality. During the reign of Leopold, " never was there an important question debated " in the councils of Europe without his being " called upon to participate directly or indirectly " in its solution; and his opinions were always " marked with the stamp of conciliation and " justice. The death of the King of the Belgians, " sir, will excite legitimate regrets not only in " Belgium but also in the whole of Europe, " whose sagacious adviser he was. The void he " leaves behind him will be with difficulty filled " up."

In England, sentiments of sympathy and of veneration for the first King of the Belgians were shown in a striking manner. When the gloomy news reached the other side of the Channel, it is reported that there was but one cry—a cry of sorrow and of fear. But soon tranquillity was restored when it was seen with what unanimity and noble enthusiasm the Belgians affirmed their resolution to be their own masters; and it was soon concluded, from the wise and lofty language of the new king, that he was determined to walk in his father's footsteps. The Prince of Wales was one day himself to say to the Belgians assembled at Wimbledon: "I witnessed in your "capital your profound gratitude for a glorious "past, and your just confidence in the future; "and I shall never forget the grand and beautiful "spectacle you presented to Europe on the ac- "cession of your beloved king." Queen Victoria had at once resolved that a monument should be erected to the memory of Leopold I. in St. George's Chapel, Windsor, beside the cenotaph of Princess Charlotte. Beneath the figure of Leopold, whose head rests upon the Belgian lion, two slabs of white marble record the high destiny

of the deceased sovereign, and the gratitude of the Queen of England. The first inscription is on this wise: "Leopold, Prince of Saxe Coburg "and Gotha, elected first king of the Belgians. "Married first, Princess Charlotte of Wales, "secondly, Princess Louise d'Orleans, by whose "side he lies at Laeken, in Belgium. Born "December 16, 1790; died December 10, 1865, "after a prosperous reign of thirty-four years." The second inscription breathes the most noble sentiments: "This monument was raised by "Queen Victoria to the memory of the uncle "who held the place of a father in her affections." Belgians, to whom Leopold I. was also a father, religiously preserve his memory. After a long reign, he left your country proportionately the most populous, the least taxed, the richest and the free-est on the continent of Europe. He left, to use the words of a brave and unfortunate prince, the escutcheon and the glorious flag of Belgium without a stain. In his reign, let us not forget, that flag alone floated over the towers of our country. What a contrast to the sad times which followed the first sundering of the Netherlands! What a contrast to the gloomy picture

of the innumerable disasters which fill the last two centuries! For more than a hundred and fifty years our ancestors were incessantly attacked and oppressed; after battles, the names of which are still repeated with awe, the banners of Castile, of France, of Austria, of England, of Hanover, and of the United Provinces were one after another hoisted upon the ramparts of our conquered cities; and our fields laid waste, our manufactures paralyzed, our commerce annihilated, bore witness to the duration and the violence of those struggles!

Belgium, independent and neutral under her first king, knew nothing of such fearful disasters. She knew nothing, either, of the troubles and humiliations endured under a foreign yoke. From Spanish, Austrian, French, and Dutch, she has become exclusively Belgian. This glorious reign, let us acknowledge, has no parallel in the annals of the country. Ah! if the contemporaries of the archdukedom of Albert and Isabella, if even the enthusiastic admirers of Maria Theresa could awake to life, they would declare that Belgium has shown the capacity to win, from 1831 to 1865, a fame quite different from that she rejoiced in

during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; they would themselves say that Leopold I. did a hundred times more for the Belgians than was done by the archdukedom and Maria Theresa; they would, in fact, confess that, comparing their lot with that of the Belgians of to-day, they were, alack! neither independent, nor free, nor prosperous. There is posterity yet to come; and it will be just. It will preserve to future ages the name of free Belgium's first—and wise—king.

Ere he went down to his grave, Leopold might with legitimate pride have said: "I dare "bear witness of myself that I had the happi- "ness to understand my people. I respected its "creeds and its traditions; I defended its rights "and interests. As mediator between Belgium "and Europe, I had the tact to gain for my "government an honourable place in the councils "of nations, and to gather about the Belgian "name universal and legitimate sympathies. As "mediator between all Belgians, I left the nation "to develop in freedom all its vigorous powers, "only striving, amidst its peaceful contests, to "constantly elucidate the true feelings of the "nation. In a word, I was true to the engage-

" ments I undertook in 1831. *Belgian as I was* " *by your adoption, I made it a law to myself* " *to be so always in my policy.*"

Subjoined is correspondence connected with the date of the chapter.

CORRESPONDENCE.

* *King Leopold to General Chazal.*

(Extract.)

" Laeken, Jan. 2, 1865.

" MY VERY DEAR MINISTER,

" Accept my most tender thanks for the wishes you so " nobly express : you know how I love you, and the high " esteem I feel for you. You have no rival in my heart. " My friendship for you will last as long as I exist on this " troubled planet of ours, and, in spite of free-thinkers, I " hope beyond that.

" LEOPOLD."

King Leopold to the Cardinal-Archbishop of Malines.

" Laeken, March 22, 1865.

" MY LORD CARDINAL,

" I have received the two letters your Eminence and " your venerable colleagues of the episcopate addressed to " me under date of the 16th of this month. Your Emi- " nence is not ignorant how much I should have wished the " Senate to make account of the observations which were " submitted by you in the name of the episcopate, touching " certain provisions of the law relative to scholarships, etc.,

" or how repugnant it was to my feelings to yield to political " necessity, and sanction the law when once it had been " voted. My dearest wish would now be to see an occasion " arise for obtaining the abolition or modification in prac- " tice of the articles which give rise to the objections of the " episcopate.

" The conciliatory disposition just evinced on the sub- " ject of the bill relative to temporalities, a disposition I " cannot sufficiently encourage, gives me hope that on this " question, which so nearly touches religious interests, an " understanding will be arrived at. An approach to agree- " ment on the part of moderate men on this ground would " be a real benefit to the country, and would cause no less " joy to me than to your Eminence and your venerable " colleagues, whose wisdom and patriotism are so highly " appreciated by me.

" LEOPOLD."

* *King Leopold to General Chazal.*

(Extract.)

" Windsor Castle, April 15, 1865.

" . . . . I have been exceedingly ill. I have been " incessantly on the point of inflammation on the chest. I " am determined to leave on the 18th, but it is not unat- " tended with danger. I have never been so uncomfortable " here; I have not been out one single time, and for several " days I was quite confined to my room. It is to be hoped " I shall get over it, but I certainly have not done so yet. " Heaven preserve you! Ever with my old and faithful " friendship."

* *Same to Same.*

"Laeken, May 12, 1865.

"MY FAITHFUL AND AFFECTIONATE FRIEND,

"I thank you for your kind words. If only the weather "had been tolerable, my blindness in this fearful season of "March might have improved, but it was as if a demon "were exclusively occupied in my destruction. What a "strange thing is existence! Those gentlemen are devoted "and clever; de Roubaix has been a great acquisition.[1] "We must wait and see what Heaven wills. Since Novem- "ber, 1864, I have had dreadful cause to complain, and "that has done me a great deal of harm.

"The affectionate wishes you are ever forming for me "shall be my protection.

"Yours wholly,

"LEOPOLD."

* *Same to Same.*

(Extract.)

"Laeken, June 16, 1865.

"Tell me how you find yourself this gloomy weather. I "have wanted much to see you, but I cannot decide upon "quitting my solitude. I am still ill, and God knows how "long it will continue: it is a complete break-up. The "fine weather has gone; and, ill as I am, I have only dared "to go out driving a little; I do not trust myself in the "gardens . . . ."

[1] M. de Roubaix, professor of medicine in the free university of Brussels.

* *Same to Same.*

"Laeken, June 26, 1865.

"MY DEAR AND EXCELLENT MINISTER,

"Being a little better these last few days, I had hoped "to see you to-day, but as it appears that all evils are to "fall to my lot, I have just had a severe attack of bronchitis. "It is the most fatal thing that could happen to me, for it "throws me back altogether, and as these colds generally "last a long while, I cannot calculate on the future.

"I have heard that the works at Antwerp suffer from "the position of the company,[2] but I hope it will not cause "over much difficulty. The position of Belgium is for the "present good, which makes it a matter of regret that "people should indulge so often in exaggerations which "might end by becoming a real danger.

"I hope *your* health keeps up; and I am, with senti-"ments of true friendship, wholly yours,

"LEOPOLD."

* *King Leopold to M. H. de Brouckere, Minister of State.*

"Laeken, July 21, 1865.

"MY DEAR MINISTER,

"I was vividly affected by the sentiments expressed "towards me in your affectionate letter of the 20th.[3] We "are still left of that epoch which had its bright side, and "which has seen great changes. You have remained a "faithful and successful defender of the elements of our "political existence; I hope that equal success will attend "all your noble efforts. My health has been much shattered

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[2] The Pauwels Company.

[3] M. de Brouckere had sent the King congratulations on the thirty-fourth anniversary of his inauguration.

" by this wretched weather, so cold in England. The " faculty say I am now going on well: may they not be " mistaken.

" It is more than thirty-four years since I was first " engaged with you in founding this State, now-a-days so " prosperous, but then beset with perils. Preserve towards " me the sentiments I have ever experienced from you, and " accept the expression of the affectionate sentiments I " shall never cease to feel for you.

" LEOPOLD."

* *King Leopold to General Chazal.*

(Extract.)

" Ostend, September 3, 1865.

" . . . . I am a little better, and stronger; but I cannot " boast yet. This last fight (Loma) of the Belgians was a " glorious affair. It is, as we have already said, of " enormous importance for the country. There is a party " however which does not allow even that yet. . . . .

" . . . . The house at Ostend is not on a good plan, " but I think it may be made to answer. I intend to pay " serious attention to the matter. Ostend was beneficial to " Queen Louise. Last year I derived great benefit from it, " and this year the good it has done me is wonderful. . . ."

* *Same to Same.*[4]

" Laeken, October 12, 1865.

" MY VERY DEAR MINISTER,

" . . . . I heard that you were not satisfied with the " state of your health: I had hoped however that the " beautiful country would do you good. Here we have

[4] General Chazal was at Pau.

" really had a wonderful September, and Ostend was of " service to me. Unhappily certain troubles did me injury; " for when you have been a long while ill you are very " susceptible. I had a violent fever, and was obliged to " leave Ostend. Since, here, I have been going on tolerably " well, but I have absolutely neither walk, nor park, nor " anything of that kind; and my only resource is to go every " day to Meysse, as the afternoon and evening are very " pleasant in this quarter.

" The papers keep you informed of all that does and even " that does not happen. There is no doubt M. de Bismarck " has made a great change in the position of Prussia.

" I cannot in writing enter far into these matters. What " is desirable is to avoid great wars; it would be difficult to " avoid catastrophes which might have quite a different " character from what is supposed.

" From Mexico there is great fluctuation of news. " Recruiting has quite stopped, and the result is desertion " here, which, I believe, does not even tend in that direction.

" Amidst great wealth there is a scarcity of money, and " public security is often endangered by bands of robbers, " who must be dreadful people.

" You know all that: it is the result of the difficulties " which political parties create for their own game without " troubling themselves whether they are not doing the " greatest harm to their own country. Let me hope that " your health is re-established, and believe me, with my old, " ever equally devoted friendship,

" LEOPOLD."

APPENDIX.

MARRIAGE OF THE KING OF THE BELGIANS AND PRINCESS LOUISE D'ORLEANS.

Extract from the Civil Records of the Royal Family of France.

In the year one thousand eight hundred and thirty-two, on Thursday the nineteenth day of the month of August, at half-past eight in the evening;

We, Stephen Denis, Baron Pasquier, Peer of France, President of the Chamber of Peers, Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour, fulfilling, according to the terms of the Royal Ordinance of March 23rd, 1816, the functions of officer of the civil estate (registrar) in respect of princes and princesses of the Royal House, accompanied only (in the absence of Charles Louis Huguet, Marquis de Sémonville, Peer of France, Grand Referendary of the Chamber of Peers) by Eugene Francis Cauchy, Auditor of the Council of State, Keeper of the Registers and Archives of the said Chamber of Peers, fulfilling the functions of clerk of the said civil estate, repaired, according to the King's commands, to the Royal Palace of Compiègne, into the state closet of His

Majesty, whither had also repaired, by commandment of the King, Horace Francis Bastrin, Count Sébastiani de la Porta, Secretary of State for the Department of Foreign Affairs, Lieut.-General in the armies of the King, Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour; Felix Barthe, Keeper of the Seals of France, Secretary of State for the Department of Justice; and Charles Amy Joseph Le Hon, envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary of H.M. the King of the Belgians, officer of the Legion of Honour;

Where being, we proceeded to performance of the marriage of the most high, mighty, and excellent Prince Leopold, first of the name (Leopold George Christian Frederick), King of the Belgians, Duke of Saxony, Prince of Coburg-Gotha, born at Coburg on the 16th December, 1790, a major, son of the most high and mighty Prince Francis Anthony, Duke of Saxony, Prince of Coburg and Saalfeld, and of the most high and mighty Princess Augusta Caroline Sophia, Duchess of Saxony, widower, since December 6th, 1817, of the most high, mighty, and excellent Princess Charlotte Augusta, daughter of the most high, mighty, and excellent Prince George IV., King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, of the one part; and of the most high and mighty Princess Louise Mary Theresa Caroline Isabella, Princess d'Orléans, born at Palermo, April 3rd, 1812, a minor, daughter of the most high, mighty, and excellent Prince Louis Philip, first of the name, King of the French, and of the most high, mighty, and excellent Princess Mary Amelia, Queen of the French, of the other part;

And to this end, in presence of the said most high, mighty, and excellent Prince Louis Philip, first of the name, King of the French, and of the most high, mighty, and excellent Princess Mary Amelia, Queen of the French, as well as in

presence of the most high and mighty Princes Ferdinand Philip Louis Charles Henry Resolin d'Orléans, Prince Royal; Louis Charles Philip Raphael d'Orléans, Duke de Nemours; Francis Ferdinand Philip Louis Marius (or Mary) d'Orléans, Prince de Joinville; Henry Eugene Philip Louis d'Orléans, Duke d'Aumale; Anthony Marius (or Mary) Philip Louis, Duke de Montpensier, sons of their Majesties; and of the most high and mighty Princesses Mary Christina Caroline Adelaide Frances Leopoldina, Princess d'Orléans; Mary Clementina Caroline Leopoldina Clotilda, Princess d'Orléans, daughters of their Majesties; and of the most mighty Princess Eugenia Adelaide Louisa, Princess d'Orléans, sister of the King;

And likewise in presence of the witnesses appointed by the King, to wit:

For H.M. the King of the Belgians, Philip John Michael, Count d'Arschot, Member of the Belgian Senate, Grand Marshal of the Court; and Philip Felix Balthasar Otho, Count de Mérode, Member of the Chamber of Representatives of Belgium, Minister of State;

And for H.R.H. the princess, the bride to be, Claudius Anthony Gabriel, Duke de Choiseul, Peer of France, Lieut.-General in the armies of the King, Aide-de-camp to His Majesty, Commander of the Legion of Honour; Francis, Marquis de Barbé-Marbois, Peer of France, first President of the Court of Exchequer, Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour; Joseph Marius, Count Portalis, Peer of France, first President of the Court of Appeal, Grand Officer of the Legion of Honour; Hugo Bernard Maret, Duke de Bassano, Peer of France, Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour; Maurice Stephen, Count Gérard, Member of the Chamber of Deputies, Marshal of France, Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour; Alphonso Marius Marcellinus Thomas Bérenger,

Member of the Chamber of Deputies; Andrew Marius John James Dupin, Member of the Chamber of Deputies, King's Counsel in the Court of Appeal; and Julius Paul Benjamin Delessert, Member of the Chamber of Deputies.

We, having received the King's commands, did put to the high-contracting parties the questions following:

Most high, mighty, and excellent Prince Leopold I., King of the Belgians, Duke of Saxony, Prince of Coburg-Gotha, will you take in marriage the most high and mighty Princess Louise Mary Theresa Caroline Isabella, Princess d'Orléans, here present? And thereupon the said most high, mighty, and excellent prince answered: I will.

Most high and mighty Princess Louise Mary Theresa Caroline Isabella, Princess d'Orléans, will you take in marriage the most high, mighty, and excellent Prince Leopold, first of the name, King of the Belgians, Duke of Saxony, Prince of Coburg-Gotha, here present? And thereupon the said most high and mighty princess answered: I will.

Whereupon we said:

By command of the King and in the name of the law we declare the most high, mighty, and excellent Prince Leopold, first of the name, King of the Belgians, Duke of Saxony, Prince of Coburg-Gotha, and the most high and mighty Princess Louise Mary Theresa Caroline Isabella, Princess d'Orléans, united in marriage.

Of all which we drew up the present certificate, and there signed, together with us, after due reading: Louis Philip, Mary Amelia, Leopold, Louise d'Orléans, Ferdinand Philip d'Orléans, Louis Charles d'Orléans, Francis Ferdinand d'Orléans, Henry Eugene Philip d'Orléans, Anthony Marius (or Mary) Philip d'Orléans, Marius (or Mary) d'Orléans, Clementina d'Orléans, E. Adelaide d'Orléans, Count d'Arschot,

Count Felix de Mérode, Duke de Choiseul, Barbé-Marbois, Count Portalis, Duke de Bassano, Marshal Count Gérard, Marcellinus Berenger, Dupin, senior, B. Delessert, H. Sébastiani, Barthe, Le Hon, Baron Pasquier, E. Cauchy.

CERTIFICATE OF DEATH.

In the year one thousand eight hundred and sixty-five, on the eleventh of December, at half-past eleven A.M., before us, Charles Joseph Herry, burgomaster, registrar of the parish of Laeken, district of Brussels, province of Brabant, assisted by Emilius Joseph Adolphus Hellebaut, parish clerk, appeared :

1st. M. Julius Bara, Minister of Justice, Member of the Chamber of Representatives, aged thirty years, domiciled at Brussels ;

2nd. M. Charles Rogier, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Member of the Chamber of Representatives, aged sixty-five years, domiciled at Brussels ;

3rd. M. Stephen Constantine, Baron de Gerlache, first President of the Court of Appeal, aged seventy-nine years, domiciled at Issels ;

4th. M. Matthew Nicholas Joseph Leclercq, Attorney-General in the Court of Appeal, aged sixty-nine years, domiciled at Saint-Josse-ten-Noode ;

5th. M. Theodore Joseph, Count van der Straten Ponthoz, grand-marshal of the court, aged fifty-six years, domiciled at Brussels ;

6th. M. Julius Van Praet, steward of the King's household, aged fifty-nine years, domiciled at Brussels ;

Who declared to us that yesterday, December the 10th instant, at forty-five minutes after eleven A.M., died, at the

palace of Laeken, His Majesty Leopold I. (George Christian Frederick), King of the Belgians, Duke of Saxony, Prince of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, born December 16, 1790, at Coburg, son of the late Prince Francis Anthony, Duke of Saxe-Coburg, and of the late Augusta Caroline Sophia, Duchess of Saxony; widower, November 6, 1817, by first marriage, of Princess Charlotte Augusta, daughter of the late George IV., King of Great Britain and Ireland, and, by second marriage, of Her Majesty Louise Mary Theresa Caroline Isabella, Queen of the Belgians, Princess d'Orléans, who died at Ostend, October 11, 1850, daughter of the late Louis Philip d'Orléans, King of the French;

And, after reading given of this present certificate, the appearants did sign together with us, the registrar and clerk of the parish.

THE END.

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